MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

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STORY OF STRUGGLE

BOOK BY
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CHAPTER XXII

THE CLASH (CONTD.)

...ngress High Command had now ...d to criticism from all sides. ...pressed Classes) on the one hand ...oned Congressmen on the other ... come out and criticised the central ...of the Congress. Some incidents in ...Congress camp and some quarrels over ...ibution of ministerial portfolios and ...djustments had given rise to personal ...ical animosity between the Congress... emselves. Too much interference of ...ss Central authority in the ...ation of the provinces had also ...siderable amount of bitterness ... the minds of those who were ... responsible for the conduct ...ovin... ...ivities.

The League had by this time acquired ...iderable status and influence among the ...almans of India and its strength was ...g felt by every one. A provincial Muslim ...ue Conference was called by the province ...Sind at Karachi, and Mohammad Ali ...h was elected its President. The right ... reception that was given to Jinnah at ...chi had somewhat heightened the signi-

ficance of this Conference more than its venue did. The Conference opened on the 8th of October 1938, amidst enthusiastic scenes. On the platform were seated the Premiers of Punjab and Bengal and leaders of the All-India Muslim League. Sir Abdullah Haroon read the welcome address and drew attention to the oft-repeated attempts made by Jinnah for the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem which had proved that his opponents were not inclined to listen to him. Sir Abdullah also drew attention to the atrocities committed by the Congress Governments in the various provinces. He dwelt at length on the Sind Ministerial tangle and declared that the Congress Party had conspired with Hindu Mahasabha to deprive the Muslims of Sind of their right of having a Ministry enjoying their confidence. He maintained there was no use shutting their eyes to the realities of the situation and ignoring the fundamental factors. He assured the minorities in Sind that if they played their part rightly the Muslim League would afford all facilities for the minorities to have their legitimate rights safeguarded.

Then rose Mohammad Ali Jinnah amidst thundering cheers and applause. "Now that your province is an independent entity," said he during his famous presidential address, "the greatest responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Musalmans of Sind for the

welfare and the progress of your province. Not long ago the Musalmans in Sind were divided and torn into groups, but to-day I am happy to find that there is a wonderful public spirit, solidarity and unity demonstrated, and with proper organisation if you mobilise and harness your powers there is nothing to prevent the Muslim League of your province from assuming the reins of Government of your province. It is in your hands now. You must remember that it is your duty and responsibility which calls upon you to conduct the affairs of the Government of Sind. The Constitution enacted by the Government of India Act of 1935, incorporates many objectionable features, but still you should utilise it with your majority strength successfully for the economic, social, educational and political uplift of the people of Sind and in particular of the Musalmans. I feel confident that mainly the Musalmans of Sind and the right-thinking Hindus will realise that the progress and the welfare of the province lies in maintaining the high principles of justice, fairplay and friendly co-operation amongst the people of Sind."

Continuing he said : "The Musalmans of Sind have another sacred duty to perform and a far graver task in front of them and it is that aspect which I want to impress upon you. In the All-India Muslim struggle against the various forces which are out to destroy

and divide the Musalmans by means of corruption and dishonest propaganda you have to guard yourselves against it and stand solid behind the All-India Muslim League which is the only authoritative organisation of the Musalmans of India . . . . . . Do not believe when you are told that the policy and programme of the League is reactionary. No honest man who has studied the policy and programme of the League can conscientiously and truthfully say that it is anything but fully national and most progressive. Yet the Muslim League and its leaders are daily misrepresented and vilified. Truth is suppressed and falsehood is broadcast in the Congress press and news agencies; of course we having no press. But the greatest misfortune of India is that the High Command of the Congress have adopted a most brutal, oppressive and inimical attitude towards the All-India Muslim League since they secured the majority in the six provinces. It is common knowledge that the average Congressman, whether he is a member by conviction or 'convenience', arrogates to himself the role of a ruler of this country, and although he does not possess the educational qualifications, training and culture and traditions of the British bureaucrat, he behaves and acts towards the Musalmans in a much worse manner than the British did towards Indians. The supreme command may well deplore corruption, untruthfulness

and violence and may further deplore the faked register of membership of the Congress by ' convenience'."

Proceeding Mohammad Ali Jinnah addressed a few words to the British also and declared: " I know that Governors and the Governor-General have failed the minorities, specially the Muslims. But on the other hand we are told that there is a gentleman's agreement and a secret understanding between the British Government and the Congress in consequence of which assurances were given that such powers would not be exercised, and so it is obvious that the Congress Ministries are getting the longest rope with the result that the foolish policy of the Congress is responsible not only for intense bitterness between the two sister communities but among the various classes and interests. It has resulted in serious clashes and conflicts and ill-will, which are bound to recoil in the long run on the progress and welfare of India. And it seems that Congress is only tumbling into the hands of those who are looking forward to the creation of a serious situation which will break India vertically and horizontally.

Speaking of the situation that Musalmans had to face, Mohammad Ali Jinnah said, "It is no use relying upon any one else. We must stand on our own inherent strength and build

up our own power and forge sanctions behind our decisions. It is no use our blaming others. It is no use accusing our opponents only; it is no use expecting our enemies to behave differently. If the Musalmans are going to be defeated in their national goal and aspirations it will only be by the betrayal of the Musalmans among us as it has happened in the past. For the renegades and traitors I have nothing to say. They can do their worst. But I appeal most fervently to those Musalmans who honestly feel for their community and its welfare and those who are misled or misguided and indifferent to come on to the platform of the Muslim League and under its flag; and please close your rank and file and stand solid and united at any and all costs and speak and act with one voice. Here I wish to make it clear that I am not fighting the Hindu community as such nor have I any quarrel with the Hindus generally for I have many personal friends amongst them."

Referring to the tragedy of Palestine that was going on and the ruthless repression that was practised against the Arabs because of their struggle for the freedom of their country, Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared, "I need hardly tell you that we had most convincing proofs demonstrated all over India that the heart of every Musalman is with them in their brave and wonderful struggle that they are carrying on against all odds and in spite of

their being 'defenceless'. According to the resolution of the All-India Muslim League Council, August 26 was observed all over India as the Palestine Day and from all accounts I can say without exaggeration that thousands and thousands of meetings were held all over India fully and fervently sympathising with those who are fighting for their country's freedom. The Musalman's heart is wounded and lacerated when they hear the news and the accounts of ruthless and tyrannical oppression and repression of those brave Arabs and I know that the entire Muslim world is watching the doings of Great Britain there.

"During the recent times Great Britain has thrown her friends to the wolves and broken her solemn promises. Only those succeed with the British people who possess force and power and who are in a position to bully them. They have also let down and thrown the Musalmans of India to the wolves. I am sure that there will be no peace in the Near East unless they give an honest and square deal to the Arabs in Palestine. In India I may draw the attention of His Majesty's Government and the British statesmen who, I am sure, are not under any delusion that Congress represents the people of India or Indian nation for there are ninety millions of Musalmans. And I would draw their attention and here also of the Congress High Command and ask them to mark, learn and inwardly

digest the recent upheaval and its consequent developments which threatened the world war. It was because the Sudeten Germans were forced under the heels of the majority of Czechoslovakia who oppressed them, suppressed them, maltreated them and showed a brutal and callous disregard for their rights and interests for two decades, hence the inevitable result that the Republic of Czechoslovakia is now broken up and a new map will have to be drawn. Just as the Sudeten Germans were not defenceless and survived the oppression and persecution for two decades so also the Musalmans are not defenceless and cannot give up their national entity and aspirations in this great continent."

Jinnah's address was listened to with rapt attention, and every now and then national slogans were raised by the whole crowd present.

The Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference, among other resolutions, passed one which gave forebodings of a future movement among the Musalmans of India. It recommended to the All-India Muslim League that it should review and revise the entire question of a suitable constitution for India, which would secure the honourable status due to Muslims. Sind resolution also suggested that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations.

During the course of this Conference, Jinnah made an attempt to enlist the support of the Muslim members of the Sind Legislature to the League. But the tripartite clique of the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Governor of Sind had developed into a formidable force. A vote of no-confidence against the Ministry was pending before the Sind Assembly, and Allah Bakhsh, the then Prime Minister of Sind, utilised the opportunity to his advantage, and emphasising the possibility of the formation of a League Ministry wired to the Congress High Command appealing to them to allow Congressmen to exercise their individual discretion in voting over this issue. The Congress High Command played into his hands for obvious reasons. This apparent failure of Jinnah was jubilantly exploited by the Hindu press. It was regarded as a death blow to the League and a great victory for the Congress. But Mohammad Ali Jinnah swallowed the reverse quietly biding his time, more determined than ever, to pursue his line of action as and when the League became more organised and developed more strength. With these insinuations and vilifications the Congress President also did not fail to join hands.

Time went on like this and Mohammad Ali Jinnah made continued efforts for organising the Musalmans and acquiring more and more strength for the League. The

plenary session of the All-India Muslim League was being held at Patna in the month of December and the situation was being keenly watched both by the Muslims and the Congress. So busy was the League leader in his work that he had to refuse the invitation of the Defence Secretary to serve on the Indian Sandhurst Committee, although the matter of Army Reform, as has been explained in the foregoing pages, is part and parcel of Jinnah's life-work. Jinnah had no time even to prepare and reduce to writing his presidential address for the Patna session of the League, and by felicitously delivering it extempore he established a precedent which is unparalleled in the history of a political organisation, at any rate in India.

The 26th Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Patna during the period 26th and 29th of December 1938. It was an imposing demonstration of the powerful position that the League had come to build up, the like of which was unknown since the Lucknow League session. It is worthy of mention that at this session, delegates coming from the remotest corners of India participated. Great enthusiasm prevailed. Many had traversed long distances on bicycles to be able to attend the session. The President was received in a unique style. It was a State Drive through a long road of seven miles, from the Patna City Railway Station to the

lawn, where the session *pandal* was situated and near which Mohammad Ali Jinnah was to stay. Along the road were arrayed, on either side, the admirers and followers of the great leader, with green flags in their hands waiting to greet him. The streets were crowded to capacity and to accommodate one more person would have been impossible. The *pandal*, too, was filled almost to suffocation, and thousands of men remained outside. Such was the zeal and enthusiasm of the people. Syed Abdul Aziz, who had sometime back resigned from the League Parliamentary Board on the question of forming mixed parties for the legislatures, was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and welcomed the popular tribune and leader of Muslim India.

Delivering his presidential address Mohammad Ali Jinnah began by expressing his sense of appreciation for the growing strength of the Muslim organisation and his deep sorrow over the death of the three great departed Muslim leaders—Maulana Shaukat Ali, Mustafa Kamal Pasha and Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal. He next addressed his audience as follows:

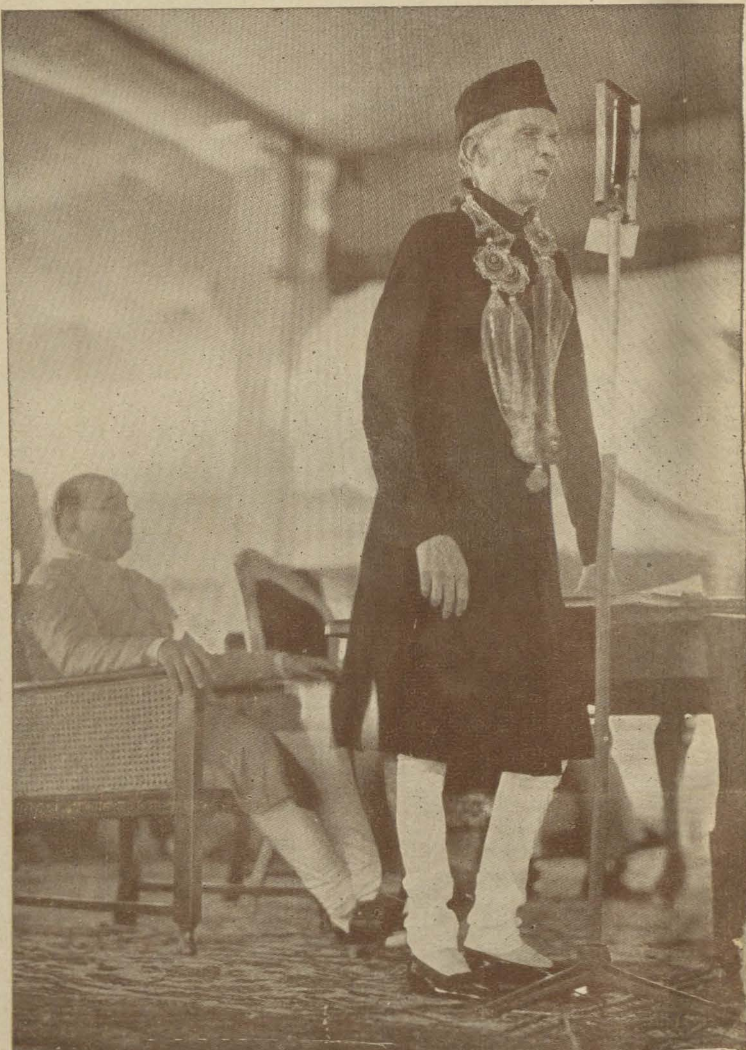
" Ladies and Gentlemen,—I will now refer to the position of the Muslim League. It was only three years ago that we laid down the policy and programme of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay. The

position at that time was this. Of the intelligentsia of the Muslims who were in the forefront of what is called political life, most —I do not say all—were careerists. They chose their places according to their convenience either in the bureaucratic camp or in the other camp, that is, the Congress camp. Those who thought that they could better their position by joining the bureaucratic camp joined the same. The others thought that they could get position and power in the Congress camp and joined that camp. Their object was how best to make careers for themselves. So far as the masses were concerned and so far as my dear young friends the Muslim youth were concerned, they were all hypnotised by the Congress falsehood. The youth believe in slogans and catchwords. They were caught right in the net that was spread for them by the Congress. They were led into the belief that the Congress was fighting for the freedom of the motherland. Being honest themselves they could not believe that other people could be otherwise. They were led to believe that the question was really an economic one and that they were fighting for *dal bhat*, for the labour and the kisans. Their pure, untutored minds became easy victims of the Congress leaders' move, who tried to make them understand that they were being misled ; we were dubbed reactionaries, communalists, and much else besides.

"That was the position in 1936. I am glad to say that things have now changed. One thing has been demonstrated beyond doubt, namely, that the Congress High Command wanted the Musalmans to be a mere understudy of the Congress, mere foot-pages of the Congress leaders, to be used, governed and brought under the heels when they had served the purpose of the Congress. The Congress leaders wanted them to submit unconditionally to their Hindu *raj*. That game has now been fully exposed. We have got ample proofs of it . . . . . The Congress has now, you must be aware, killed every hope of Hindu-Muslim settlement in the right royal fashion of Fascism. The Congress does not want any settlement with the Muslims of India. As the Chairman of Reception Committee has said in his address, the Congress wants the Muslims to accept the settlement as a gift from the majority. The Congress High Command makes the preposterous claim that they are entitled to speak on behalf of the whole of India, that they alone are capable of delivering goods. Others are asked to accept the gift as from a mighty sovereign. The Congress High Command declares that they will redress the grievances of the Muslims, and they expect the Muslims to accept the declaration. I want to make it plain to all concerned that we Muslims want no gifts. The Muslims want no concessions. We Muslims of India have made up our minds

to have our fullest rights but we shall have them as rights, not as gifts or concessions. As I have said before, there are four forces at play in this country. Firstly, there is the British Government. Secondly, there are the rulers and people of the Indian States. Thirdly, there are the Hindus and, fourthly, there are Muslims. The Congress press may clamour as much as it likes, they may bring out their morning, afternoon, evening and night editions, the Congress leaders may cry as much as they like that Congress is a national body. But I say it is not true. The Congress is nothing but a Hindu body. That is the truth and the Congress leaders know it. The presence of the few Muslims—the few misled and misguided ones and the few who are there with ulterior motives—does not, cannot make it a national body. I challenge anybody to deny that the Congress is mainly a Hindu body. I ask, does the Congress represent the Muslims? I ask, does the Congress represent the Christians? I ask, does the Congress represent the scheduled castes? I ask, does the Congress represent the non-Brahmans? I say the Congress does not even represent all the Hindus. What about the Hindu Mahasabha? What about the Liberal Federation? The Congress, no doubt, is the largest single party in the country. But it is nothing more than that. It may arrogate to itself whatever titles it likes; the Congress High Command, in the intoxication of power,

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like persons who are drunk, may make any claims it pleases them to make. But such claims cannot alter the true character of the Congress. It remains what it is—mainly a Hindu body."

Proceeding, the League President declared that he had no hesitation in saying that the genius behind the Congress attitude and the Congress policy was no other than Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who was out to destroy the ideal with which the Congress was started. He was the one man responsible for turning the Congress into an instrument for the revival of Hinduism. His ideal was to revive Hindu religion and establish Hindu Raj in India, and he was utilising the Congress to further this object.

Of the outcome of the Patna League two things must be mentioned. A resolution for direct action against the atrocities committed by the Congress Governments on the Musalmans was tabled before the League session and occupied most of the time of the League. The word "atrocities" is no exaggeration. The provinces concerned were asking for an authority to be given to them for such an action. But Mohammad Ali Jinnah's political sagacity would not allow it as he foreshadowed a complete rift between the Hindus and Muslims which was not in the larger interests of India, and he argued with the

Subjects Committee. Finally his arguments carried the day and authority was vested in the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League for emergency action.

The second important outcome of this session was the appointment of a Ladies' Sub-Committee, which was entirely due to the efforts of Jinnah himself. But the reader will have occasion to learn about this later.

It now looked like a game of hide-and-seek between the Congress and the League. The Congress leaders were out to justify every action of the Congress. The League President was bent upon exposing them. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now sure of his ground and also of his strength. A series of events in the shape of Wardha scheme of Education, the Rajkot affair, the Shia-Sunni dispute at Lucknow, Hyderabad *Satyagraha* and scores of other vexations had convinced the bulk of Muslim opinion that the Congress had no intention of respecting the feelings of Muslims. All this had driven the Congress to a state of desperation and it was feeling uncomfortable in its position. Gandhi had already started writing about his failures and blunders, and he frequently hinted at the Congress corruption, deprecating the use of the police and military in support of the Congress Ministries for the conduct of their normal activities. In fact, Gandhi had realised that if the Congress

was allowed to continue in office the whole organisation might tumble down like a house of cards, and he was biding his time to get a suitable opportunity to retrace his steps and enable the Congress, once more, to gain its lost prestige.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah also was not quite satisfied with his position. His exposition of the Congress game, although purely in self-defence, was not without benefit to the forces of British Imperialism who were also waiting to make use of every grain that might be available. Jinnah was, therefore, between the devil and deep sea, and under the circumstances he had no alternative but to conduct a double-sided battle against the Congress and the British Government. During his speech on the Finance Bill in March 1939 he made the position of the League clear and once for all told the officialdom that they could not expect the Muslims to play to their tune. "Sir, in the past," said he, "we have been following the principle that if the Government brought in a measure which was really for the good of the people, then we would support it. If it is not in the interests of the people we would oppose it. But, sir, I see now that that policy must be altered. It really means this, that we are reduced to this position. When the Congress is right, 'support the Congress'. When the Government is right, 'support the Government'. But when we are right,

nobody supports us. Sir, we feel, therefore, and I want to ask the Government, what has been your policy? What has been your attitude? And what have been your actions so far as my Party is concerned? I am glad that the Finance Member in his long speech said, 'remember Cawnpore, remember Benares, remember Budaon,' but I can tell this House that there are many other places in this country where even the elementary rights of Muslims have been trampled upon; and what have the Government done? I remember reading, sir, not long ago, a speech made by Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel in which he said: 'There cannot be any basis for all these allegations, for all these complaints of ill-treatment, injustice, tyranny and persecution. The simple reason is that if there was any such thing, surely the Governors would have intervened.' And I think Mr. Bhulabhai Desai very recently made a speech and he relied upon the same argument, namely, that if there was an iota of truth in these baseless allegations that we were making, surely the Governors would not have been sitting tight and would have immediately intervened. Therefore, because the Governors have not intervened, my Honourable friend is satisfied."

Jinnah drew the attention of the House to the happenings in Palestine, Waziristan, Jaipur and other places and enquired: "Where is the Paramount Power? What is the Para-

mount Power doing? I am not asking that you should intervene for the purpose of putting pressure upon the Indian States or to force them into undertaking 'constitutional reforms', but this is a fundamental and basic principle of maintaining civilised administration. Is this fairplay and justice done to the elementary rights of citizens? Sir, I can give instances after instances, but I do not want to waste the time of the House, and, besides, this is not the occasion for it. Why do you expect us, I ask the Government, to draw the chestnuts out of the fire on your behalf? Why do you expect us to continue to be subservient on the specious pleas which you put forward before us? We have, therefore, so far as the Government are concerned, made up our mind that we will render no assistance to you so far as this Finance Bill is concerned. You may go on your own way. On the other hand, as regards the Congress Party, I do not want on this occasion to go into details, but I do maintain that the Congress Party is not only hostile to the Muslim League but they are inimical. Therefore, I say to them that co-operation between you and us is not possible. But they will say: 'all right, we are the largest number here.' Yes, you may be the largest number; you may be more advanced; you may be stronger economically, and you may think that the counting of heads is the final judgment. But let me tell you—and I tell both of you—that you alone or this

organisation alone or both combined will never succeed in destroying our souls. You will never be able to destroy that culture which we have inherited, the Islamic culture, and that spirit will live, is going to live and has lived. You may overpower us; you may oppress us; and you can do your worst. But we have come to the conclusion and we have now made a grim resolve that we shall go down, if we have to go down, fighting. Therefore, the position is this. I make this protest as a first step—a solemn protest, a declaration on the floor of the House as to what our attitude is with regard to this Finance Bill. Our hearts are singed and burnt; our blood is boiling; we shall suffer and we shall go through fire. The attitude that we are going to take is this. We are not going to move any amendment. Do what you like with your Bill. We are not going to support any amendment moved by the Congress Party or any other Party. Possibly, the result of it would be that the Government will be defeated and the Congress will win, because, I know, they have got a sufficient majority if we remain neutral as we are going to remain neutral. But I tell my Congress friends that your victory will not go beyond the little room called the lobby. If you have any sense of satisfaction in having won, you may have it. Your true victory and your real victory will be when you will stretch your hand across and remove the barrier between this

Party and that Party. Therefore, we have definitely decided not to vote for any of the amendments by whomsoever moved. We are not going to support the Government, because the British Government has failed even to secure us our elementary rights of citizenship, and those special powers which were assumed under the guise of the Governors and the Governor-General being the protectors and the trustees of minorities have proved to be a fraud, worse than a fraud. I myself, therefore, do not wish to take any further part in this debate. But it is open to the members of my Party that they can freely express their opinion as to the merits of the amendments for the purpose of enlightening the Finance Member of the Government of India. As far as the Finance Bill is concerned it is his and of the Congress Party. You take the responsibility and do what you like with it."

The progress of the League was nevertheless proceeding at great speed. Musalmans, throughout India, had realised that they had ultimately to depend upon their own inherent strength. Every important leader had come back to the fold of the League. Provincial workers had already been busy chalking out programmes for the amelioration of the conditions of Muslims. Thinkers were busy formulating schemes of educational, industrial and social reforms. Jinnah was flooded with letters from all parts of India

containing suggestions and opinions supported with facts and figures. The rule of the Congress Governments in some provinces had given considerable impetus to the idea of separate nationhood for Muslims. The Sind Conference had also encouraged the thought. Those Muslims who thought, under the influence of the Congress, that Mohammad Ali Jinnah was leading the Musalmans merely out of a spite against the Congress and not in their real interest were slowly being convinced of the sincerity of the League and the League President. He had successfully repudiated the charge that the League was a body of the henchmen of the foreign rulers, and Muslim intelligentsia was slowly but steadily being attracted to the League. Serious thinking had already started, and early in the year 1939 no less than five schemes of Pakistan were published from different quarters laying down principles and details of the future constitution according to their conceptions.

The question that was uppermost in Jinnah's mind was that of the Federal part of the Indian Constitution. Gandhi's silence on this point for some time past was suspected by Musalmans to mean that the Congress might ultimately accept the Federation. The question, therefore, naturally arose as to what the Muslim position would be then. Hitherto the Congress and the British Government

both treated the Muslim League with indifference and it was feared that there might be another gentlemen's agreement between Gandhi and the Viceroy in this connection. The Muslim leader had to keep his eyes open and watch the situation with no little alarm. A number of political conferences were, therefore, held throughout India and Muslims expressed their unequivocal disapproval of the Federal Scheme and warned the Government that any decision without the consent and approval of the Muslims of India would be utterly disastrous.

Apart from this, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's attention was being engaged by other important matters. The Palestine question had not been solved and Musalmans were pressing him to help in the speedy settlement of this question. The war clouds hovering over the world due to the deterioration of the international situation in Europe had made matters worse and the progress that Muslims of India were making under the banner of the All-India Muslim League was likely to be obstructed. At home, in India, the Congress was now resorting to the extraordinary tactics of "contacting" the Provincial leaders of the League for piecemeal pacts without any reference to Mohammad Ali Jinnah and without attempting to arrive at a settlement on an All-India basis. The policy was pursued through the agency of Maulana

Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President. The Congress High Command perhaps thought that it would be easy to corrupt and placate the League leaders in the provinces and thus to undermine the authority of the League President. Mohammad Ali Jinnah naturally resented this attitude and at the first opportunity exposed the Congress once more. British reactionaries were also not quiet. They were inciting the Muslim provinces where provincial governments were also working under Muslim Premiers, most important of them being the Punjab, that in the event of the League taking up a firm attitude about the war, they should stand aloof and give full support to war effort, and Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan had for a number of times issued statements to the press and made public announcements that could be taken as militating against the League and its authority. Capital was made out of Sir Sikandar's public utterances by the Congress and the Hindu press to show that Punjab was revolting against the League and that it was not the authoritative and representative organisation of Musalmans of India.

In short, there was now a complete clash between the League and the Congress and the two organisations were fighting openly against each other—the former for self-assertion and upholding its rights, and the

latter for complete supremacy in Akhand Hindustan or paramountcy for Hindus in the whole of India.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE WAR

The declaration of war on the 3rd of September 1939 by Great Britain and France on Germany brought India to the threshold of a new era. His Excellency the Viceroy simultaneously declared war on Germany on behalf of India and in a broadcast speech made an appeal for unity. Lord Linlithgow immediately invited Gandhi and Jinnah to discuss with them the possibility of evolving a system by which a united effort for the prosecution of war could be ensured. On the 11th his Excellency addressed the Central Legislature and read out a message from His Majesty the King. The Viceroy, once again, appealed for unity and declared that the Federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935 was suspended. The suspension of Federation was undoubtedly decided upon by the British Government as a gesture of good-will so that India's co-operation in the stupendous task of waging the war against Germany could be obtained with the consent of the Indian peoples, and that is why Lord Linlithgow went out of his way to emphasise the need for unity among the different elements of India's political life. But as far as the Congress was concerned, the appeal

of the Viceroy went as much unheeded as those of Mohammad Ali Jinnah during the past few years.

The growing popularity among the Muslims of the idea of their being a separate nation had been received not without a protest by the Congress leaders, particularly by Gandhi. The only way, to nip it in the bud, was to accept the Federation as contemplated by the Act of 1935. But the previous utterances of Gandhi had made it impossible for the Congress to decide in favour of such a course in an offhand manner. Ground had to be prepared to enable the Congress to retrace its steps, and Gandhi was busy over doing so. The announcement of the Viceroy, therefore, that Federation was suspended, came as a rude shock to Gandhi and the Hindu Congress, and while the League welcomed the suspension the Congress had to swallow it as a bitter pill without uttering a single word of opposition.

For the Musalmans the position was quite clear. With the reorientation of Muslim opinion under the able leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had won as a mark of appreciation and respect a title of Qaide Azam (the great leader) from the Musalmans, the problems and questions confronting the Muslims had tended to separate themselves from those that confronted the

Hindus. The past experiences of Muslims during Congress rule in the provinces had made it absolutely necessary for them to insist on safeguarding their position in the future scheme of things, especially in the abnormal conditions created by the war.

The Working Committees of the Congress as well as of the League met soon after the declaration of war to review the situation and passed lengthy resolutions. The Congress complained that India had been declared a belligerent country without the consent of the people of India " whose declared wishes in such matters have been deliberately ignored by the British Government." It declared its "entire disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism and their glorification of war and violence and the suspension of the human spirit." The Congress Committee " further laid down that the issue of war and peace for India must be decided by the Indian people, and no outside authority can impose this decision upon them, nor can the Indian people permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends." The Congress demanded that Britain should state what her war aims were, and put forward the claim that India should be immediately declared independent and the right of self-determination should be granted to her in order to frame a constitution for her through a Constituent Assembly based on adult

franchise.

The League Working Committee on the other hand passed the following resolution : " The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League appreciate the course adopted by his Excellency the Viceroy in inviting Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, and apprising him of the international situation resulting in war, and his own views, to be conveyed to the Muslim League. The Working Committee have given their most earnest consideration to his Excellency the Viceroy's views conveyed to them by the President and also to the pronouncement made by the Viceroy since the declaration of war by Great Britain as also his Excellency's address to the Members of the Central Legislature on the 11th of September 1939.

" The Committee are of opinion that the views expressed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League by its resolution No. 8 of the 27th of August 1939 in the following words—'While deploring the policy of the British Government towards the Muslims of India by attempting to force upon them against their will a Constitution, and in particular the Federal Scheme as embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, which allows a permanent hostile communal majority to trample upon their religious, political, social and economic rights and the utter

neglect and indifference shown by the Viceroy and the Governors in the Congress-governed provinces in exercising their special powers to protect and secure justice to the minorities; and towards the Arabs in Palestine in refusing to meet their demands, holds the view that in these circumstances if the British Government desires to enlist the support and the sympathy of the Muslims of the world, and particularly of the Indian Muslims in future contingencies it must meet the demands of the Muslims of India without delay,'—are the true sentiments and opinions of the Musalmans of India.

"The Working Committee appreciate the declaration of his Excellency the Viceroy, which is in the interest of India and particularly the Musalmans, that the Federal Scheme embodied in the Government of India Act 1935 has been suspended. They wish that instead of its being suspended it had been abandoned completely and desire to convey to His Majesty's Government that they should do so without further delay. The Committee desire to make it clear that they do not endorse the 'Federal objective' of his Majesty's Government referred to by his Excellency in his address to the members of the Central Legislature and strongly urge upon the British Government to review and revise the entire problem of India's future Constitution *de novo* in the light of the experience

gained by the working of the present provincial constitution of India and developments that have taken place since 1935 or may take place hereafter.

"The Committee in this connection wish to point out that Muslim India occupies a special and peculiar position in the policy of India and for several decades it had hoped to occupy an honourable place in the national life, government and administration of the country and worked for free India with Free and Independent Islam in which they could play an equal part with the major community with complete sense of security for their religious, political, cultural, social and economic rights and interests; but the developments that have taken place, and specially since the inauguration of the provincial constitution based on the so-called democratic parliamentary system of government, and the recent experiences of over two years have established beyond doubt that it has resulted wholly in a permanent communal majority and the domination of the Hindus over the Muslim minorities whose life and liberty, property and honour are in danger and even their religious rights and culture are being assailed and annihilated every day under the Congress Governments in various provinces.

"That while Muslim India stands against exploitation of the people of India and has

repeatedly declared in favour of 'Free India' it is equally opposed to the domination of Hindu majority over Musalmans and other minorities and vassalization of Muslim India and is irrevocably opposed to any 'federal objective' which must necessarily result in a majority community rule under the guise of democracy and parliamentary system of government. Such a constitution is totally unsuited to the genius of the peoples of the country which is composed of various nationalities and does not constitute a national state.

"The Muslim League condemns unprovoked aggression and the doctrine that 'might is right' and upholds the principles of freedom of humanity and 'that the will of the strongest irrespective of right and justice cannot be allowed to prevail'. The Committee express their deep sympathy for Poland, England and France. The Committee, however, feel that real and solid Muslim co-operation and support to Great Britain in this hour of her trial cannot be secured successfully if His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy are unable to secure to the Musalmans justice and fairplay in the Congress-governed provinces where today their liberty, persons, property and honour are in danger and even their elementary rights are most callously trampled upon. The Committee strongly urge upon His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy and

Governor-General to direct the Governors to exercise their special powers, where any provincial ministry fails to secure justice and fairplay to the Musalmans or where they resort to oppression or interference with their political, economic, social and cultural rights, in accordance with the sacred promises, assurances and declarations repeatedly made by Great Britain in consequence of which these special powers were expressly embodied in the Statute. The Committee regret to say that so far these special powers have remained dormant and obsolete and the Governors have failed to protect the rights of the Musalmans under the threat by the 'High Command' of the Congress that exercise of these special powers on the part of the Governors will lead to crises in all the Congress-governed provinces, where they are in a solid majority.

"While the Muslim League stands for the freedom of India the Committee further urge upon His Majesty's Government and ask for an assurance that no declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League nor any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval.

"The policy of the British Government towards the Arabs in Palestine has wounded deeply Muslim feeling and sentiment and all representations in that behalf have had no real effect so far. The Committee once more urge upon His Majesty's Government to satisfy the Arab National demands.

"If full, effective and honourable co-operation of the Musalmans is desired by the British Government in the grave crisis which is facing the world today and if it is desired to bring the war to a successful termination it must create a sense of security and satisfaction amongst the Musalmans and take into its confidence the Muslim League which is the only organisation that can speak on behalf of Muslim India.

"At this critical and difficult juncture the Committee appeal to every Musalman to stand solidly under the flag of the All-India Muslim League with a solemn and sacred determination to make every sacrifice for on it depend the future destiny and the honour of the ninety millions of Musalmans of India."

It is clear from the above that as the outlook of the two organisations differed on fundamentals, their decisions regarding the war were bound to be different and their respective views on the problem were naturally in

conflict with each other. But while the Muslim League proceeded to suggest and demand remedies for the wrong already done to Muslims of India and while it asked for safeguards for them, the Congress went out of its way to propose things on the assumption that it represented the whole of India, without paying any attention to the views of the League. Such an attitude, therefore, was bound to aggravate Muslim feelings. To Mohammad Ali Jinnah, however, the Congress policy was the ruin of its own self, and the League leader strongly believed that the growing strength of the League would ultimately compel the Congress to realise that without the support of the Musalmans nothing could be done. He had an unflinching faith in the prospects of a Hindu-Muslim settlement which would result when Musalmans were sufficiently organised. Speaking on the occasion of the annual dinner of the Old Boys of the Osmania University, on the 28th of September 1939, Mohammad Ali Jinnah expressed this hope in the following words: " I did not expect that, even at this festive board where a galaxy of intellects have assembled, I would be involved in discussing political problems confronting India. But as reference has been made to the matter, I must assure you that I yield to none in the determination to safeguard the interests of my country, nor would I yield to anybody in striving for the attainment of freedom for my country. I am essentially a

practical man, I have been in practical politics for over a quarter of a century. The words 'nationalism' and 'nationalist' have undergone many changes in their definition and significance. Some people have a dictionary of their own, but within the honest meaning of the term, I still remain a nationalist. I have always believed in a Hindu-Muslim pact. But such a pact can only be an honourable one and not a pact which will mean the destruction of one and the survival of the other. The Congress High Command, unfortunately, are not prepared to grasp the hand of friendship, but would like to destroy the very hand which offered friendship. One does not see much light at present but you never can say when the two communities would unite. I say to every Musalman that Islam expects you, one and all, to do your duty and stand by your people as one nation."

On the 22nd October 1939 the Congress asked its ministries to resign on the plea that they could not carry on in view of the unsatisfactory attitude of the British Government towards India and consequently Section 93 of the Indian Constitution came into operation in most of the Congress provinces. It was now the turn of Mohammad Ali Jinnah to strike and prove to the world that the Congress did not in fact represent the Muslims, and on the 2nd of December after careful consideration he issued an appeal

to Muslims that the 22nd of December should be celebrated as the " day of deliverance and thanksgiving as a mark of relief that the Congress regime has at last ceased to function". Consequently, Musalmans celebrated the Day of Deliverance throughout the length and breadth of India and various other parties who were mainly non-Muslim, collaborated with them. The overwhelming success of this bold move baffled the Congress High Command and for a time the Hindus did not know what to do. Gandhi wrote an article in the *Harijan* and forwarded an advance copy to Jinnah, who sent the following reply on the New Year's day of the year 1940.

" I am in receipt of your letter of 16th December and the advance copy of the article you have sent to the *Harijan*. I not only thank you for your courtesy but also for your anxiety to further the end you have been reading in my messages and actions. I, however, regret to have to say that your premises are wrong as you start with the theory of an Indian Nation that does not exist, and naturally, therefore, your conclusions are wrong. I should have thought, however, that you at least would not be led away by one-sided newspaper reports and canards. There is so much in your article which is the result of imagination. It is due partly to the fact that you are living

a secluded life at Segaon, and partly because all your thoughts and actions are guided by 'inner voice.' You have very little concern with realities, or what might be termed by an ordinary mortal 'practical politics.' I sometimes wonder what can be common between practical politics and yourself, between democracy and the dictator of a political organisation of which he is not even a four-anna member. But that is, I suppose, because you do not consider the Congress worthy of your membership.

"I am glad to learn that you were not ruffled by the 'Deliverance Day' greetings sent to you from Gulbarga. It was indeed noble of you to join in the silent prayer, 'Long live Qaid-e-Azam, Jinnah! Although these are trivial matters, I nevertheless appreciate that you have realised the true inward meaning and significance of the 'Deliverance Day'.

"It is true that many non-Congress Hindus expressed their sympathy with the Deliverance Day in justice to our cause, so also the leaders of the Justice Party and the Scheduled Castes, and the Parsis who had suffered. But I am afraid that the meaning which you have tried to give to this alignment shows that you have not appreciated the true significance of it. It was partly a case of 'adversity bringing strange bedfellows together,' and partly because common interest may lead

Muslims and minorities to combine. I have no illusions in the matter, and let me say again that India is not a nation, nor a country. It is a subcontinent composed of nationalities, Hindus and Muslims being the two major nations. Today you deny that religion can be a main factor in determining a nation, but you yourself, when asked what your motive in life was, 'the thing that leads us to do what we do', whether it was religious, or social, or political, said : ' Purely religious.' This was the question asked me by the late Mr. Montagu when I accompanied a deputation which was purely political. "How you, a social reformer," he exclaimed, "have found your way into this crowd?" My relpy was that it was only an extension of my social activity. I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of "sound and fury signifying nothing."

"More than any one else, you happen to be the man today who commands the confidence of Hindu India and are in a position

to deliver the goods on their behalf. Is it too much to hope and expect that you might play your legitimate role and abandon your chase after a mirage? Events are moving fast, a campaign of polemics, or your weekly discourse in the *Harijan* on metaphysics, philosophy and ethics, or your peculiar doctrines regarding *khaddar*, *ahimsa* and spinning are not going to win India's freedom. Action and statesmanship alone will help us in our forward march. I believe that you might still rise to your stature in the service of our country and make your proper contribution towards leading India to contentment and happiness.

"Lastly, I thank you for your anxiety to respect my wishes in the matter of prefix you should use with my name. What is in a prefix after all, a rose called by any other name smells just as sweet. So I leave the matter entirely to you, and have no particular wish in the matter. I really do not know why you are worried so much about it. I, however, notice that the present prefix you are using is according to the usage taught to you by the late Hakim Sahib. But, surprisingly enough, during his lifetime and till long after his death, you addressed me as *Mr.*, then quite recently you addressed me as *Shree*, and in between as *friend*, but please do not bother about this matter."

The opinions expressed by the League Working Committee were put forward before the Viceroy, when Jinnah met him. They were, as Jinnah himself said later, fivefold. One of these demands, it seemed, had been misunderstood by the Viceroy. The League had asked that Indian troops should not be used against any Muslim power or country outside India. This did not imply that Indian troops were not to be used for the defence of India. If any country attacked India, the Indian army had to fight to safeguard Indian boundaries. The League had also demanded a clear statement on behalf of the British Government that the present Act of 1935 would go lock, stock and barrel, and the entire scheme of constitutional reform would be examined *de novo* in the light of experience gained from the working of the Constitution during the last two and a half years, and in the light of experience which might be gained in future. Another demand of the League was that Muslims would not agree to any declaration or enactment of any constitution, unless their consent had been obtained for it, nor was any interim settlement to be made under threat or at the behest of any other party, however strong it was, without the previous approval of the Muslims. The fourth demand was for the settlement of the Arab question and Jinnah urged on behalf of the League that "endeavours to reach a settlement" would not do, and the British Govern-

ment must reach a settlement to the satisfaction of the Arabs forthwith. The last demand of the League related to the Muslim grievances in the Congress-governed provinces. It was true that the Governor-General could not intervene when the Congress Ministries did not exist. The question, however, had two aspects. "Firstly, we made it abundantly clear that the Muslims had been oppressed in the Congress-governed provinces, and members of the League were made special targets. The Congress High Command characterised these statements as false, but was willing to set up a judicial tribunal. That proposal was absurd for reasons already given. On the other hand I offered to accept a Royal Commission consisting of two Judges of the English High Court and presided over by a Lord of the Privy Council. Such a tribunal, completely detached from the poisoned atmosphere of the country, and equipped with the necessary powers to examine witnesses on oath and compel the production of documents, was the only one that could have done justice. But that proposal was treated by the Congress with derision on the ground that we were invoking foreign aid in our domestic affairs, as if Sir Maurice Gwyer, proposed by them, was a *swadeshi* or born in Wardha!" The second aspect of the question was whether the High Command caucus-ministries were again to be put into office. The Deliverance Day demonstrations had amply shown how every section

of the people outside the Congress was opposed to the Congress rule, including the Hindus who were members of the Hindu Mahasabha and "who prayed with us from the League platform on the Deliverance Day."

To all these demands made by Mohammad Ali Jinnah on behalf of Musalmans of India the Viceroy, in his letter of the 23rd of December 1939, addressed to the Muslim leader, replied as follows: "I am now in a position to reply to your letter of November 5th, in which you submitted certain points for my consideration. You will, I am sure, appreciate that more than one of your questions, if considered in the light of all the implications involved in it, would raise issues affecting other communities in India, and that this correspondence between us would not be an appropriate medium for making pronouncements on them. But I hope that my answers, limited though their scope may be by this consideration, will nonetheless serve to remove your difficulties.

"My answer to your first question is that the declaration I made with the approval of His Majesty's Government on October 18th last does not exclude examination of any part either of the Act of 1935 or of the policy and plans on which it is based.

"With reference to your second point,

I can assure you that His Majesty's Government are not under any misapprehension as to the importance of the contentment of the Muslim community to the stability and success of any constitutional developments in India. You need therefore have no fear that the weight which your community's position in India necessarily gives their views will be underrated.

"In framing their policy for Palestine, His Majesty's Government have endeavoured to meet all reasonable Arab demands, and they continue to be fully alive to the importance of that issue.

"Finally, you asked for an assurance that Indian troops will not be used outside India against any Muslim Power or country. This question is fortunately hypothetical, since His Majesty is not at war with any Muslim power. You will appreciate, however, that it is impossible to give a guarantee in terms so wide as those of your letter, which would have the effect of limiting India's right to use its own army in its own defence in circumstances which cannot now be foreseen; in the present situation, however, as you are aware, every precaution has been taken by His Majesty's Government at the instance of the Government of India to ensure that Muslim feeling in India on this matter is fully respected."

In the meantime, the Congress having put forward a suggestion that the question of the future constitution of India should be decided by a Constituent Assembly and Gandhi on behalf of the Congress conducted the usual propaganda in foreign countries and a studied programme of vilification was launched in India against the League and the Muslim leader. Muslim India had no press of its own, and in view of the biased news that reached England and other foreign countries public opinion abroad did not gain a very happy impression about the Musalmans. There was no effective machinery within the League to combat these forces and the onus of counteracting all these manoeuvres fell solely on Mohammad Ali Jinnah himself.

A study of the various statements that Jinnah issued to the foreign press during this time are worthy of note as they give the reader some idea as to how uncalled-for attacks were levelled against the Musalmans and through what stages they were passing. The following is the text of the statement given to a representative of the *Manchester Guardian*: "I am obliged to the *Manchester Guardian* for the courtesy shown to me in giving me an opportunity to place my views briefly before the British public. It is difficult to make an average Englishman understand fully the position which is facing us Muslims today. But I shall mention a few salient

points which will give some idea of the difficulties that are confronting us. The Muslims have always had their fears and apprehensions of even a representative form of government, and far more of democracy in its strict application to India. Since the time of the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1908 and the historical Lucknow Pact between Hindus and Muslims in 1916, their insistence on separate electorates, weightage and statutory safeguards have been a clear indication of those fears. But, since the inauguration of the new provincial constitutions, it has been established beyond doubt, particularly by the way in which the Congress High Command has pursued its policies and programmes, that the sole aim and object of the Congress is to annihilate every other organisation in the country, and to set itself up as a Fascist and authoritarian organisation of the worst type.

" Having regard to the 35 millions of voters, the bulk of whom are totally ignorant, illiterate and untutored, living in centuries-old superstitions of the worst type, thoroughly antagonistic to each other, culturally and socially, the working of this constitution has clearly brought out that it is impossible to work a democratic parliamentary Government in India. It has definitely resulted in a permanent Communal majority Government ruling over minorities, exercising its powers and

functions and utilising the machinery of Government to establish the domination and supremacy of the majority communal rule over the minorities. Therefore, in my judgment, apart from other reasons into which I need not go in detail, democracy can only mean Hindu Raj all over India. This is a position to which Muslims will never submit. Besides, there are 60 million of untouchables and other minorities such as six million Christians, Jews, Parsis and the Domiciled British. Therefore, the Muslim League, after very careful consideration, has come to the conclusion that the entire problem of India's future constitution must be considered; and that no declaration or commitment should be made by His Majesty's Government without the approval and consent of the Muslim League which is the only authoritative and representative organisation of the Muslims of India.

"The British public may be misled by certain propaganda that the Muslims are against the freedom of India. We want freedom and liberty, but the question is, whose freedom and liberty? Muslim India wants to be free and enjoy liberty to the fullest extent and develop its own political, economic, social and cultural institutions according to its own genius, and not to be dominated and crushed, while wishing Hindu India well and giving it fullest scope to do likewise. I know that the Englishman who

has developed in his own country a system of parliamentary government cannot think of anything else but what has worked and been developed through the centuries as the only pattern for every other country in the world. But he must dismiss from his mind the experiments tried in Canada and Australia, where after all the foundations of Government are suited to the genius of the people, mainly British in stock. It is very doubtful as to how it will work in South Africa where there are two powerful rival communities like the Boers and the British, and even here the differences between them are not so fundamental as those between Hindus and Muslims. Even Ireland, after decades of union, did not submit to the British Parliament in spite of the close affinity with the English and Scotch. I may refer to Lord Morley's dictum that the fur coat of Canada would not do for the extremely tropical climate of India.

"The Congress insistence that they, and they alone, represent the people of India is not only without any foundation, but is highly detrimental to the progress and advancement of India. They know that they do not represent the whole of India not even all the Hindus, and certainly not the Muslims, who are often wrongly described as a minority in the ordinary sense as understood in the West. They are in a majority in the North-West and in Bengal, all along the corridor stretching

from Karachi to Calcutta. That part of the Indian continent alone has double the population of Great Britain and is more than ten times in area. Until the Congress come down to earth and face realities, they will be wholly responsible for blocking the progress of India, and unless they give up the Fascist and authoritarian basis of their policy and programme which they are vigorously following, there cannot be any peace in India."

Jinnah was then asked for his views regarding certain schemes put forward by Muslim League leaders like Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and his proposal for Coalition Ministries in the provinces, representing the Congress and the Muslim League. Jinnah said: "There are many proposals and schemes and importance is attached to these schemes, particularly to the one suggested by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan in view of the position he holds in the League and as the Premier of the Punjab. Although his proposals may create an impression that they have emanated indirectly from the Muslim League, I want to make it clear that the League is not responsible for any of them directly or indirectly. As a matter of fact, we have appointed a sub-committee to examine the whole question thoroughly and when this sub-committee has made its report it will be examined by the Working Committee of the League in order to take such

steps as it may think proper. Until that stage has been reached, the Muslim League feels in no way bound by any schemes or proposals that are propounded by various people."

During the close of the year 1939 Gandhi gave an interview to an American journalist and in reply to a question as to what his view was towards the parties in a democratic India, Gandhi said that there was only one party which could deliver the goods, and that was the Congress. Told that there was the Muslim League, Gandhi said: "I would not accept any other party except the Congress." Then it was pointed out to him that if there was to be only one party in India the Government would be Fascist and not democratic. Gandhi replied: "Damn it, by whatever name you may call it, there can be only one party in India, and that is the Congress." Such a statement putting powerful elements in the political life of India completely out of the picure could naturally not go unchallenged and when Gandhi gave an interview to the *News Chronicle* on Constituent Assembly, Mohammad Ali issued the following statement: "I would have preferred to remain silent, but I am compelled to counteract the vigorous one-sided propaganda of the Congress, both in India and abroad, and, in fact, it is only to defend the Muslim League that I speak at all."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah regretted very much that Gandhi and the Congress leadership should continue in their attitude which could only bring harm to India. Analysing Gandhi's frame of mind Jinnah said: "Suddenly Mr. Gandhi, who was always sceptical about the Constituent Assembly, has now become an enthusiastic convert and its champion. He has been misrepresenting and insinuating motives to the Muslim League recently, for instance, that the League is an obstacle to the progress of the country and is out to sell itself to the highest bidder, in his periodical articles published in the *Harijan*. He generally indulges in a campaign of polemics and metaphysics, *ahimsa* and truth. But his interview to the *News Chronicle* is for the consumption of the British public. A more disingenuous statement it would be difficult to find, coming from Mr. Gandhi, and it is a pity it comes from one who is a votary of truth. His sudden affection for the Constituent Assembly is on a par with what he has only striven to do for two decades. The opinion that counts is Indian opinion, not even Congress opinion. India's opinion can be ascertained by the free vote of her people. The only true and democratic method is to ascertain their will through adult suffrage, or any agreed equivalent.

"The first question will be when he

says, 'any agreed equivalent to adult suffrage,' between whom is that agreement to be arrived at? Secondly, if Britain is not to depend on Muslims, Hindus or any other opinion, not even Congress opinion, then what is India's opinion? Now that the Congress stands exposed, that it does not represent India and that it is really a Hindu body, Mr. Gandhi is pleased suddenly to stand for a Constituent Assembly, which, in the present condition of India, will mean a second and larger edition of the Congress. Having brushed aside the Indian Princes, ignoring their existence altogether, he (Mr. Gandhi) proceeds to lay down a most extraordinary proposition. 'I fail to see,' he says, 'why Britain's intention about India should be dependent upon Muslim, Hindu or any other opinion.' Mr. Gandhi then proceeds to say, 'So far as the Congress is concerned, the people of the Indian States should be represented precisely on the same footing as those of British India.' Who will arrange that? And how are electorates to be established there? And what is to happen to the Treaty rights and relationships between the British Government and the Indian Princes?

"Then he proceeds, 'Muslims and other accepted minorities may be represented by separate electorates, if necessary.' This is a concession, but there is no grace in it

when he further proceeds to state that it should be done in the exact proportion to their numbers. He knows perfectly well that they will be in a hopeless minority in the Constituent Assembly of Mr. Gandhi's conception, where he hopes to get a brute majority against the Muslims, including other minorities. He makes a further concession that 'they will determine what is required for their protection.' Is the Constituent Assembly to be bound by the minority vote as to what is required for their protection and for each minority ? And then comes the omnibus clause, which is fundamentally wrong, and once more shows blind arrogance, when he says that in all matters of common interest the composite majority decision should prevail. Therefore, the Muslims and other minorities will have to submit to the verdict of the Assembly as to the nature, character and the form of the future Constitution of India, which will presumably be dictated dy Mr. Gandhi on behalf of the Congress, as for instance, Muslims and other minorities may prefer a bicameral legislature, whereas the Congress-controlled majority of the Assembly may decide against it—which, according to Mr. Gandhi, will be final.

" But evidently his new-born faith in the Constituent Assembly is getting shaken a bit already, because he says if a better way than the Constituent Assembly could be found for

knowing the will of the people, so far as I know, the Congress will accept it without hesitation.' Mr. Gandhi is neither concerned with the size of the country nor the illiteracy of the masses. A truly representative Assembly presupposes that in order faithfully to express the judgment of the people it can only be constituted if you have a fully developed public opinion, an electorate educated and experienced, free from superstition and capable of judging the vital political issues affecting the country, and not as India stands to-day, composed of castes, creeds, superstitions and provincial jealousies quite apart from the main division of British India and the Indian states. The Assembly proposed by Mr. Gandhi would at best, therefore, be a packed body manoeuvred and managed by the Congress caucus. It is surprising when Mr. Gandhi complacently says that an election campaign will itself be sufficient education for the purpose of broadly knowing the popular will. But, have we not had sufficient evidence, under the present constitution, though in smaller and more informed electorates? And what about the experience of the Congress (with its four-anna franchise) of abuses of power and malpractices which were eloquently condemned by Mr. Gandhi himself? It will not be the 'popular will,' as Mr. Gandhi professes, but it will be the will of one community, which is in an overwhelming majority.

"But he is anxious, 'as a friend of Britain bound by many personal ties,' that she should come out victorious not because of superiority in the use of arms but because of her will to be just all along the lines, hence his anxiety to advise Britain to follow him to secure success in the war. Mr. Gandhi's notion of justice is to follow what he advises, then alone it can be just. I am constrained to say I wish Mr. Gandhi will stop airing views which change from day to day and week to week and which consistently perpetuate inconsistencies and apply his mind to the only and one question, namely, settling the Hindu-Muslim question as he, of all the Congress leaders, is best fitted to represent the Hindus as such and he can deliver the goods on behalf of the Hindus and bring about complete adjustment between the two major communities and the rest will follow. I need hardly reiterate that I am willing to help to the utmost of my power on behalf of the Muslims towards an honourable solution.

"Apart from this academic discussion about a Constituent Assembly, it shows colossal ignorance, both historic and constitutional, to expect a foreign power that is dominating this country to sign its death warrant. The Constituent Assembly can only be real when it has got the sovereign authority of the people behind it, forged by the people, and who are in a position

to convene such a supreme national body, whose decisions and verdict could be respected and honoured and whose fiat and writs could be enforced. It is puerile to ask the British Government, in the first instance, to call a Constituent Assembly of another nation and afterwards have the honour and privilege of placing the Constitution framed by this supreme assembly of India on the Statute Book of the British Parliament."

In November His Excellency the Viceroy once again made an attempt to bring about unity between the Congress and the League and invited the Presidents of the two organisations together with Gandhi and on the 2nd of November 1939 wrote to them the following letter: "You will remember that I agreed during our conversation yesterday to let you have in concrete form the proposition which I put to you and the other gentlemen who were present at the meeting, emphasising that I did so with a genuine desire to help, a desire fully shared by His Majesty's Government.

"The proposition which I invited you and the other gentlemen present to consider, as leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League, was that, given the great importance of ensuring harmonious working at the Centre, you should enter upon discussions between yourselves with a view to discovering

whether you could reach a basis of agreement between yourselves in the provincial field, consequent on which you could let me have proposals which would result in representatives of your two organisations immediately participating in the Central Government as members of my Executive Council.

"I brought out, too, that, in my judgment, it ought not to be necessary absolutely to resolve every detail of such differences as may exist in the provinces. What was required, as was remarked in the course of the discussion, was a degree of agreement in respect of the provinces, such as to make it possible for my visitors, and the organisations which they represented, to put forward a scheme which could be considered for the Centre.

"I added, in regard to any arrangement at the Centre:

"Firstly, that one would hope that it might be found practicable to include also one or possibly more representatives of other important groups, and that was a question on which I should value your advice when we came to grapple with the details;

"Secondly, that the arrangement which I invited you to consider for the

Centre would be an *ad hoc* arrangement for the period of the war, and quite distinct from the much wider question of constitutional reform at the end of the war; and I mentioned that on that last point my declaration had set out the position of His Majesty's Government. I attach a copy of the extracts from that declaration which I brought to the notice of the meeting yesterday;

"Thirdly, that the position of anyone appointed to my Executive Council as a member of a political party would be identical, in privileges and in obligations, with that of the existing members of my Council; and

"Fourthly, that the arrangement would be within the general scheme of the existing law. It would be admittedly and inevitably a makeshift arrangement for the duration of the campaign. I brought out that what was required now, if we could get a workable scheme together was to put it into operation with as little delay as possible, pending the more general review of the whole constitutional position which His Majesty's Government have expressed

their readiness to undertake after the conclusion of hostilities.

"I think the above makes the position clear. Let me, in conclusion, repeat that, as I said yesterday, I am at any time at your disposal or that of the other gentlemen who attended our meeting, whether jointly or singly, to give any assistance in my power in reaching conclusions on these most important matters. I feel certain, as I said yesterday, that the suggestions I have put to you, reflecting as they do very real and substantial evidence of the anxiety of His Majesty's Government to reach a complete understanding, will receive full and sympathetic consideration from you."

The reply that was sent by Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Congress stated at the outset that both he and Gandhi missed at the interview any reference to the "main and moral issue" raised by the Congress about clarification of war aims, without which it was impossible for the Congress to consider any subsidiary proposal. Rajendra Prasad insisted on the declaration suggested by the Congress Working Committee some time ago and resented "the communal question being dragged in, in this connection."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, on the other hand, sent the following reply: "With

reference to the joint interview which Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Congress, and myself had with you on November 1, and in reply to your letter dated November 2, I beg to inform you that I understood that the Congress leaders and myself were to consider the proposals of Your Excellency. In consequence I met the leaders of the Congress and I was informed by them finally that they had come to the conclusion that they could not discuss any questions with regard to matters referred to in your letter of the 2nd instant, relating to the provincial field or at the Centre, until the British Government had complied with their demand as embodied in the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee; hence these two questions were not further discussed."

This was the story of the official attempt at unity. Unofficially Jawaharlal failed to discover a 'common ground' between him and the League leader, and after an exchange of a few letters the matter was dropped.

CHAPTER XXIV

MUSLIM DEMAND

The All-India Muslim League was now entering on a different phase altogether. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had become the living symbol of Muslim unity and Muslim politics had so completely centred round him that he had become almost an institution in himself. Muslim opinion was being successfully and correctly voiced by him and Musalmans were satisfied with his leadership and people had learnt to repose confidence in the League. The fear of exploitation by others of the Muslim platform and Muslim sentiment had vanished. Those who were expecting to use the League for their own personal ends were also disillusioned and Muslim intelligentsia regained the hope of making the League into a really national organisation of the Musalmans, and instead of criticising it and giving it up as a bad job was offering constructive suggestions. The League had attracted the younger generation to its ideals and they were beginning to realise that further apathy towards their own organisation would involve the danger of letting it pass into unworthy hands for which they themselves would be responsible. They were, therefore, taking once more an active interest in the League and its work.

The annual session of the League opened at Lahore on the 22nd March 1940 amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. Thousands met in the huge *pandal* which was tastefully decorated. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the President-elect arrived, in the afternoon and was conducted to the *pandal* in a procession. He was received by the huge gathering with a great ovation. Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot welcomed the session in a speeah and pointed out that the greatest achievement of the League during recent years was the suspension of the Federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935.

The Presidential Address delivered by Mohammad Ali Jinnah extempore gave a summary of the events and activities of the League during the last few months. Jinnah said: "We are meeting to-day in our session after fifteen months. The last session of the All-India Muslim League took place at Patna in December 1938. Since then many developments have taken place. I shall first shortly tell you what the All-India Muslim League had to face after the Patna session of 1938. You remember that one of the tasks, which was imposed on us and which is far from completed yet, was to organise Muslim Leagues all over India. We have made enormous progress during the last fifteen months in this direction. I am glad to inform you that we have established

Provincial Leagues in every province. The next point is that in every by-election to the Legislative Assemblies we had to fight with powerful opponents. I congratulate the Musalmans for having shown enormous grit and spirit throughout our trials. There was not a single by-election in which our opponents won against Muslim League candidates. In the last election to the U. P. Councils, that is the Upper Chamber, the Muslim League's success was cent per cent. I do not want to weary you with details of what we have been able to do in the way of forging ahead in the direction of organising the Muslim League. But I may tell you that it is going up by leaps and bounds.

"Next, you may remember that we appointed a committee of ladies at the Patna session. It is of very great importance to us, because I believe that it is absolutely essential for us to give every opportunity to our women to participate in our struggle of life and death. Women can do a great deal within their homes even under purdah. We appointed this committee with a view to enabling them to participate in the work of the League. The objects of this central committee were, firstly, to organise provincial and district Muslim Leagues; secondly, to enlist a larger number of women to the membership of the Muslim League; thirdly, to carry on an intensive propaganda amongst

Muslim women throughout India in order to create in them a sense of greater political consciousness—because if political consciousness is awakened among our women, remember, your children will not have much to worry about; and fourthly, to advise and guide them in all such matters as mainly rest on them for the uplift of Muslim society. This central committee, I am glad to say, started its work seriously and earnestly. It has done a great deal of useful work. I have no doubt that when we come to deal with their report of work done we shall really feel grateful to them for all the service that they have rendered to the Muslim League.

"We had many difficulties to face from January 1939 right up to the declaration of war. We had to face the Vidya Mandir in Nagpur. We had to face the Wardha Scheme all over India. We had to face ill-treatment and oppression to Muslims in the Congress-governed Provinces. We had to face the treatment meted out to Muslims in some of the Indian States such as Jaipur and Bhavnagar. We had to face a vital issue that arose in that little state of Rajkot. Rajkot was the acid test made by the Congress which would have affected one-third of India. Thus the Muslim League had all along to face various issues from January 1939 up to the time of the declaration of war. Before the war was declared the greatest danger to the Muslims of India was the possible

inauguration of the Federal scheme in the Central Government. We know what machinations were going on. But the Muslim League was stoutly resisting them in every direction. We felt that we could never accept the dangerous scheme of the Central Federal Government embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935. I am sure that we have made no small contribution towards persuading the British Government to abandon the scheme of Central Federal Government. In creating that mind in the British Government the Muslim League, I have no doubt, played no small part. You know that the British people are very obdurate people. They are also very conservative ; and although they are very clever, they are slow in understanding. After the war was declared, the Viceroy naturally wanted help from the Muslim League. It was only then that he realised that the Muslim League was a power. For it will be remembered that up to the time of the declaration of war, the Viceroy never thought of me but of Gandhi and Gandhi alone. I have been the leader of an important party in the Legislature for a considerable time, larger than the one I have the honour to lead at present, the Muslim League Party in the Central Legislature. Yet the Viceroy never thought of me before. Therefore, when I got this invitation from the Viceroy along with Mr. Gandhi, I wondered within myself why I was so suddenly promoted and then I

concluded that the answer was the 'All-India Muslim League,' whose President I happen to be. I believe that was the worst shock that the Congress High Command received, because it challenged their sole authority to speak on behalf of India. And it is quite clear from the attitude of Mr. Gandhi and the High Command that they have not yet recovered from that shock. My point is that I want you to realise the value, the importance, the significance of organising ourselves. I will not say anything more on the subject."

Jinnah explained the position in which Musalmans found themselves and said they were between the devil and the deep sea. The Congress on the one hand and the British Government on the other were trying to put Muslims in an awkward position. The Congress rule during the past two and a half years had been most objectionable and the declaration of war had brought increased trouble and worry. But the Federal scheme was now abandoned and they had to think for the future. "Now," said he, "what is our position with regard to the future Constitution? It is that, as soon as circumstances permit or immediately after the war at the latest, the whole problem of India's future Constitution must be examined *de novo* and the Act of 1935 must go once for all. We do not believe in asking the British Government to make declarations. These declarations are

really of no use. You cannot possibly succeed in getting the British Government out of this country by asking them to make declarations. However, the Congress asked the Viceroy to make a declaration. The Viceroy said, 'I have made the declaration.' The Congress said, 'No, no; we want another kind of declaration. You must declare now and at once that India is free and independent with the right to frame its own constitution by a constituent assembly to be elected on the basis of adult franchise or as low a franchise as possible. This assembly will of course satisfy the minorities' legitimate interests.' Mr. Gandhi says that if the minorities are not satisfied then he is willing that some tribunal of the highest character and most impartial should decide the dispute. Now, apart from the impracticable character of this proposal and quite apart from the fact that it is historically and constitutionally absurd to ask the ruling power to abdicate in favour of a constituent assembly, apart from all that, suppose we do not agree as to the franchise according to which the Central Assembly is to be elected, or suppose we, the solid body of Muslim representatives, do not agree with the non-Muslim majority in the constituent assembly, what will happen? It is said that we have no right to disagree with regard to anything that this assembly may do in framing a national constitution of this huge sub-continent except those matters which may be germane to the

safeguards of the minorities. So we are given the privilege to disagree only with regard to what may be called strictly safeguards of the rights and interests of minorities We are also given the privilege to send our own representatives by separate electorates. Now, this proposal is based on the assumption that as soon as this contribution comes into operation the British hand will disappear. Otherwise there will be no meaning in it. Of course, Mr. Gandhi says that the constitution will decide whether the British will disappear and, if so, to what extent. In other words, his proposal comes to this. 'First give me the declaration that we are free and independent nation, then I will decide what I should give you back!' Does Mr. Gandhi really want the complete independence of India when he talks like this? But whether the British disappear or not, it follows that extensive powers must be transferred to the people. In the event of there being a disagreement between the majority of the Constituent Assembly and the Musalmans, in the first instance, who will appoint the tribunal? And suppose an agreed tribunal is possible and the award is made and the decision given, who will, may I know, be there to see that this award is implemented or carried out in accordance with the terms of that award? And who will see that it is honoured in practice, because, we are told, the British will have parted with their power completely? Then what will be the sanction

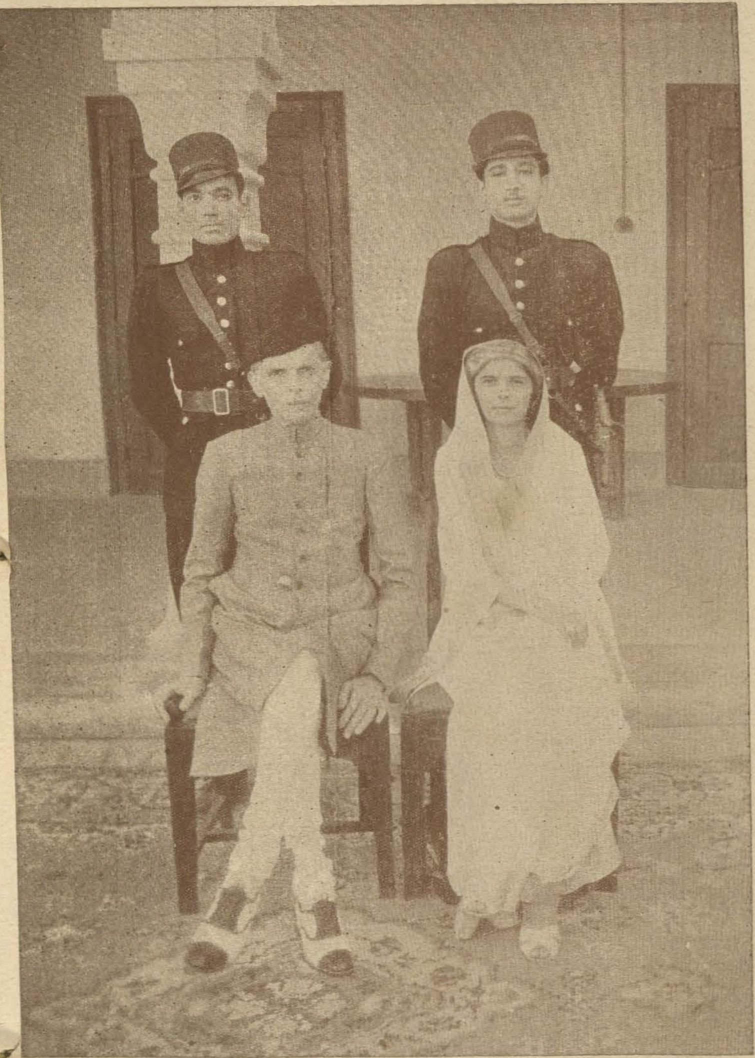
behind the award which will enforce it ? We come back to the same answer: the Hindu majority would do it—and will it be with the help of the British bayonet or Mr. Gandhi's 'ahimsa'? Can we trust them any more ? Besides, ladies and gentlemen, can you imagine that a question of this character, of social contract upon which the future constitution of India would be based affecting ninety million of Musalmans, can be decided by means of a judicial tribunal ? Still that is the proposal of the Congress."

"As far as our internal position is concerned," he proceeded, "we have also been examining it and, you know, there are several schemes which have been sent by various well-informed constitutionalists and others who take interest in the problem of India's future constitution, and we have also appointed a sub-committee to examine the details of the schemes that have come in so far. But one thing is quite clear: it has always been taken for granted mistakenly that the Musalmans are a minority and, of course, we have got used to it for such a long time that these settled notions sometimes are very difficult to remove. The Musalmans are not a minority. The Musalmans are a nation by any definition."

"The problem in India," declared Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "is not of an inter-communal but manifestly of an international

character, and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realised, any constitution that may be built will result in disaster and will prove destructive and harmful not only to the Musalmans but to the British and Hindus also. If the British Government are really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this sub-continent, the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous national states. There is no reason why these states should be antagonistic to each other. On the other hand the rivalry and the natural desire and efforts on the part of one to dominate the social order and establish political supremacy over the other in the government of the country will disappear. It will lead more towards natural good-will by international pacts between them, and they can live in complete harmony with their neighbours. This will lead further to a friendly settlement all the more easily with regard to minorities by reciprocal arrangements and adjustments between Muslim India and Hindu India, which will far more adequately and effectively safeguard the rights and interests of Muslims and various other minorities.

"It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real natures of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the



Mr. M. A. Jinnah with his Sister Miss F. Jinnah and their A.D.C.'S at Aligarh

word, but are, in fact, quite different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literature. They neither intermarry, nor interdine and, indeed, they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state."

On the next day the open session of the All-India Muslim League passed the following resolution:

"(1) While approving and endorsing the

action taken by the Council and the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated the 27th of August, 17th and 18th of September and 22nd of October 1939, and 3rd of February 1940 on the constitutional issue, this session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of Federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to, and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

"(2) It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October 1939 made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935, is based will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties, interests and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo* and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

"(3) Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to

Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

"That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; and in other parts of India where the Musalmans are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specially provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

"This session further authorises the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as

defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary."

One of the most outstanding features of the Lahore League was the masterly handling by Mohammad Ali Jinnah of the unfortunate situation that developed due to a clash between the Khaksars and the Punjab Government, which had resulted in the loss of life of some Khaksars. The incident had incited the feelings of Punjab Muslims and had driven them to frenzy. The position of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Punjab Premier, had become rather awkward. Muslim opinion from which he drew most of his support had been excited against him and he was even exposed to personal danger. The opponents of the League had not failed to use this incident to incite public opinion against the leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, for he, according to them, was unmindful of what was happening to Musalmans. Khaksars and their sympathisers threatened him with all sorts of things. They insisted that the League must take the matter up and deal with Sir Sikandar in a befitting manner. The lieutenants of Jinnah suggested that he should interview some of the Khaksar leaders. The conduct of the regular business of the League was more and more being exploited by the League opponents, and Khaksars were made to believe

that Jinnah would leave Lahore after having successfully evaded the issue. Khaksars were threatening the peaceful atmosphere of the League Session and the personal safety of Mohammad Ali Jinnah was equally a matter of anxiety. In the midst of all this excitement and uncertainty, Jinnah announced that he would address an open meeting of Khaksars and the Muslim public at large. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered to listen to him and every thoughtful Muslim believed that Jinnah had taken an impolitic step, looking to the highly pent-up public feelings. The huge gathering showed every sign of a probable riot. But Jinnah, a well-groomed, well-dressed, tall and slim, with experience and courage written on his face came and ascended the pedestal from which he was going to speak to the crowd. Calm in his demeanour, he cracked a few jokes with those sitting around him and in the midst of imminent rowdyism, gracefully lighted a cigarette with complete equanimity. In a few minutes the eyes of every one present were riveted on him and an atmosphere of strange expectancy prevailed upon the great mass of the people. Loud shouts demanding justice filled the air.

After some moments, Mohammad Ali Jinnah stood up and raised his hand bidding his audience to remain calm, and pin-drop silence ensued. This was the time when Jinnah, perhaps, gauged his strength for

the first time. This was the time when he realised how much devotion he had earned from his followers by sheer service. This was the time when he felt how much confidence Musalmans of India had already reposed in him. The demonstration was enough to hearten any man. Armed with self-reliance and the weight of his own judgment, with righteousness and justice of his cause, with power and courage of convictions and with a determination to give the right lead to his followers he spoke, though not without being quite excited himself, a few words assuring every one that he had the cause of his people at heart, and that he would do everything in his power to see that justice is meted out to Khaksars. The League was assembling at Lahore and there was no cause for anxiety. The meeting terminated in a peaceful atmosphere and Jinnah enlisted support of thousands of more Musalmans.

As a result of this the League passed the following resolution: "This session of the All-India Muslim League places on record its deep sense of sorrow for the unfortunate and tragic occurrence on March 19, 1940, owing to a clash between the Khaksars and the police resulting in the loss of a large number of lives and injuries to many more, and sincerely sympathises with those who have suffered and with their families and

dependents.

"This session calls upon the Government to appoint forthwith an independent and impartial committee of inquiry, the personnel of which would command perfect confidence of the people with instructions to them to make full and complete investigation and inquiry in the whole affair and make their report as soon as possible.

"This session authorises the Working Committee to take such action in the matter as they may consider proper immediately after the publication of the report of the committee.

"This session urges upon the various Governments that the order declaring the Khaksar organisation unlawful should be removed as soon as possible."

The resolution was moved from the chair. Jinnah assured the Musalmans that, whether it be the Punjab Government, the Government of India, the Punjab Ministry or the Punjab Premier, the League would not rest until the Khaksars got justice. Jinnah requested every Musalman in the Punjab and particularly the Khaksars in the Punjab and elsewhere in India to put their heads together and see that when time of inquiry came they placed their material before

the investigating authority. Jinnah said: "The resolution is the result of discussion in the Subjects Committee last night from 9 p.m. to 2 o'clock in the morning. The Subjects Committee adopted this resolution in the form in which it is now placed before you. They have passed it unanimously and now it is for you to deal with it. The resolution represents their considered opinion and they want me to convey to you that this resolution should be put from the chair. There are many reasons for this course to be adopted. The first reason is that it will not be desirable to have people coming and making speech after speech. It is very difficult to restrain passions and some may say something which might be considered harmful to our interests. Another reason is that the matter is *sub judice.* It asks for a full and complete investigation and inquiry and it will not be in the fitness of things that on the one hand we ask for an inquiry and on the other we pronounce our judgment." Jinnah reminded the audience that there was a clause in the resolution which authorised the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League to take such action as they thought proper immediately after the publication of the report of the Enquiry Committee.

At the close of the League session the Muslim leader again referred to the Khaksar

tragedy and said he was very much perturbed when he learnt about the firing on the Khaksars. He was advised not to hold the session of the League but as he had the fullest faith in his people he decided not to postpone the session. When he reached Lahore he told press representatives in an interview that the Lahore session of the Muslim League was going to be a landmark in the future history of the Musalmans of India. He had no doubt that barring this tragedy on the eve of the session, it had proved a great success. Had there not been this tragedy, there would have been a magnificent procession and they would have had the opportunity of demonstrating their enthusiasm. Their enemies wanted to mar the session, somehow or other, but all their attempts had failed and the session had concluded successfully. Jinnah was happy that deliberations of the session were conducted in a calm and quiet atmosphere. It was the acid test for the Muslims, when their blood was boiling, and when no less than thirty Muslims were shot dead, it was very difficult to keep calm. "But you have demonstrated to the world that the Musalmans are capable of bearing sorrows. You have also shown to the world that you can conduct your business in a gathering of lakhs. It is the finest certificate that can be given to any nation. The prestige of the League was in the hands of the Musalmans of the Punjab I, there-

fore, congratulate the Punjab Muslims from the bottom of my heart. It gives me courage to serve you all."

The Lahore League was indeed a landmark in the history of India and of the Musalmans. Before this, Muslim India had no goal in view and Muslim politics remained in the hands of the individuals of conflicting interests and inclinations. Very often the collective good of the nation suffered either at their hands or at the hands of their agents and wire-pullers. Iqbal and his followers had tried to place before the Muslims their rightful goal but they could not do it effectively. It required a Jinnah to fulfil the aspirations of a nation and that tco at the most psychological moment. Muslims of India were now organised and learnt to know that their organisation was more important than those individuals who had hitherto conducted the affairs of the Musalmans. The British Government had declared that the policy underlying the Government of India Act of 1935 was to be revised. The Federal Scheme of this Act had already been suspended and in any future constitution, the views of Muslim India were to be taken into consideration. It was therefore in the fitness of things that Musalmans expressed their views regarding the kind of the constitution they would like to have and the result was the Lahore Resolution. It was in fact the spirit of Iqbal

that showed itself through Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The Muslim Poet had recognised in Jinnah as the only leader who could accomplish the stupendous task of bringing the scattered forces of Muslim India to a common field for unified action. Jinnah knew it and was waiting for the opportunity to hit the mark at Lahore. "Iqbal is no more amongst us," said Jinnah to the author once, "but had he been alive he would have been happy to know that we did exactly what he wanted us to do."

The Lahore Resolution of the League was followed by an immediate and intensified campaign of misrepresentation of the League demand. Every scrap of Hindu opinion rose in opposition, and some of the Hindu leaders even went the length of using indignified words against the League President. Judgments were passed the day after the publication of the League Resolution. Facts and figures were quoted in utter contradiction of truth. Contorted narrations of incidents of history were made. Examples with no meaning were cited. Dissimilar analogies were employed. Frothy sentiments were surging up. Musalmans were warned against their own decision and their own leadership. Overnight the Hindu leadership became the champions of Musalmans. Overnight they began to think in terms of a world order. Some said that the League wanted the

Muslim minorities in Hindu areas to migrate to Muslim areas. Others opined that Sikhs would never agree to this proposal. A few were of the opinion that the Muslim proposition would not suit the Indian States and therefore it was useless to pursue the matter. Wardha spoke in the same strain, and hoped that Great Britain would not allow it to materialise.

Undeterred by this volley of attacks Jinnah hoped "that at any rate the better mind of the Hindus will give earnest and serious consideration to our proposals as therein lies the achievement of India's freedom at the earliest possible period. This freedom we shall be able to retain peacefully both internally and externally."

To Jinnah it was amazing that " men like Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Rajagopalacharia should talk about the Lahore resolution in such terms as 'vivisection of India' and 'cutting the baby into two halves.' Surely, to-day India is divided and partitioned by Nature. Muslim India and Hindu India exist on the physical map of India, I fail to see why there is this hue and cry. Where is the country which is being divided? Where is the nation which is denationalised? India is composed of nationalities, to say nothing about the castes and subcastes. Where is the central national Government whose authority is being violated? India

is held by the British power and that is the hand that holds and gives the impression of a United India and a unitary Government. Indian nation and central government do not exist. It is only the convenient imagination of the Congress High Command. It is a pure intellectual and mental luxury, in which some of the Hindu leaders have been indulging so recklessly."

"The issues involve," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "the future fate and destiny of ninety million of Musalmans and I am sure that Muslim India to-day is fully alive to the gravity of the situation both internal and external that is facing us. Our ideal and our fight is not to harm or injure any other community or interest or block the progress but to defend ourselves. We want to live in this country an honourable life as free men, and we stand for free Islam and free India."

Hindudom gave the Lahore Resolution of the League the name of Pakistan and it was gratefully accepted by the Musalmans.

CHAPTER XXV

THE DEADLOCK

His Excellency the Viceroy's proposals at Delhi in November 1939, that the Congress and the Muslim League should enter upon discussion between themselves with a view to discovering whether they could reach a basis of agreement in the provincial field which would be followed up by the representatives of the two organisations immediately participating in the Central Government as members of the Executive Council, were summarily rejected by the Congress. But the Viceroy had resolved to continue his efforts to enlist India's support for the successful prosecution of the war. Negotiations between the Viceroy and Mohammad Ali Jinnah were proceeding apace through correspondence and personal interviews. On the first of July 1940, Jinnah while in Simla, at the invitation of His Excellency the Viceroy, forwarded the following suggestions marked as "Tentative Proposals":

"That no pronouncement or statement should be made by His Majesty's Government which would in any way militate against the basic and fundamental principles laid down by the Lahore Resolution of division of India

and creating Muslim States in the north-west and eastern zones; and it may be stated that that ideal now has become the universal faith of Muslim India.

"That His Majesty's Government must give a definite and categorical assurance to the Musalmans of India that no interim or final scheme of constitution would be adopted by the British Government without the previous approval of Muslim India. In view of the rapid developments in Europe and the grave danger that is facing India it is fully realised that everything should be done that is possible to intensify war efforts and mobilise all the resources of India for her defence, for the purpose of maintaining internal security, peace and tranquillity, and to ward off external aggression. But this can only be achieved provided the British Government are ready and willing to associate the Muslim leadership as equal partners in the Government both at the Centre and in all the Provinces. In other words, Muslim India leadership must be fully trusted as equals and have equal share in the authority and control of the Governments, Central and Provincial.

"Provisionally and during the period of the war, the following steps should be taken to comply with the formula, namely, co-operation with the Government with equal share in the authority of the Government:

"(a) That the Executive Council of the Viceroy should be enlarged, within the framework of the present constitutional existing law, the additional number to be settled after further discussion but it being understood that the Muslim representation must be equal to that of the Hindus if the Congress comes in; otherwise they should have the majority of the additional members as it is obvious that the main burden and the responsibility will be borne by the Musalmans in that case.

"(b) That in the provinces where Section 93 of the Act has to operate, Non-official Advisers should be appointed, the number to be fixed after further discussion, and the majority of the Non-official Advisers should be the representatives of Musalmans; and where the provinces can be run by a combination of parties or 'coalition,' naturally it would be for the parties concerned to adjust matters by agreement among themselves.

"(c) That there should be a War Council consisting of not less than fifteen members, including the President, to be presided over by His Excellency the Viceroy. I do not like the expression 'War Consultative Committee'. This Council should regularly meet to deal with, and review the general situation as it may develop from

time to time, and advise the Government with regard to matters in connection with the prosecution of the war generally, and in particular, the fullest development of defence possible and of finance and to make a thorough economic and industrial drive. On this body it will not be difficult to secure the representation and full co-operation of the Indian Princes, and as far as I can judge they would have no difficulty in joining it. It is through this body that the association of the Princes can be secured. Here again the representation of the Muslim India must be equal to that of the Hindus if the Congress comes in, otherwise they should have the majority.

"Finally, the representatives of the Musalmans on the proposed War Council and the Executive Council of the Governor-General and the additional Non-official Advisers of the Governors, should be chosen by the Muslim League."

The Viceroy wrote back to Jinnah on the 6th of July as follows:

"I am much obliged for the private and personal memorandum headed 'Tentative Proposals' which you were kind enough to send me in your letter to my Private Secretary on July 1. I note the points taken in Paragraph 1 of that memorandum, and in the

first sentence of Paragraph 2, both of whih you emphasised in our recent conversation. I welcome also the amplification, as putting me in fuller possession of your mind, of that conversation represented by the balance of your letter. But certain of the points taken suggest there may be some slight misapprehension, which you will, I think, agree that it would be desirable that I should clear without delay.

" As regards my expansion of the Executive Council, this would, as you rightly observe in your memorandum, be within the existing constitutional scheme. In other words, any council so expanded would co-operate as a whole and as a single Government of India. It is not a case of striking a balance between the different interests or of preserving the proportions between the important parties. As you yourself indicated in the course of our conversation, there are parties other than either Congress or the Muslim League who may fairly claim to be considered for inclusion, and there is a very definite limit of numbers to any possible expansion. At the same time I readily accept the importance, in the event of any expansion, of securing adequate representation of Muslim interests, and that is a point which I would bear in mind.

" There is, however, as you will see from

my explanation, no question of responsibility falling in greater or less degree on any particular section. Responsibility will be that of the Governor-General-in-Council as a whole. Again, it will be clear that under existing law and practice it must remain with the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Governor-General, to decide upon such names as we may submit to His Majesty the King for inclusion in the Governor-General's Executive Council, and such persons cannot be the nominees of political parties, however important; though it may, of course, be assumed that both the Secretary of State and the Governor-General would, in all cases, do their utmost to select persons from the various sections of the community.

"I need not remind you that under law the whole responsibility for Government in Section 93 provinces vests exclusively in the Governor, although a Governor can, of course, take advantage of the assistance of any advisers he may appoint. Whether, and if so at what point, and in what strength, Non-official Advisers from political parties should be appointed in provinces under Section 93 administration, in the event of an expansion of the Governor-General's Council, would clearly call for consideration in the light of circumstances of each province. You will, I think, agree with me also that the importance of the community from which Advisers are

drawn in a particular province has a direct bearing.

" Your idea for a War Council is, in my view, well worth-while considering, though details would have to be worked out. Here again there are, of course, many parties to be considered other than the Muslim League or the Congress.

" As regards Section III of your memorandum, I ought, I think, to make it clear that it would be constitutionally impossible for the choice of Muslim gentlemen to be appointed to any expanded Executive Council or as Non-official Advisers to rest with the Muslim League. But in the contingency envisaged you need not fear that any suggestions you may put forward would not receive full consideration.

" Let me, in conclusion, thank you again for your very clear and valuable memorandum. I realise, of course, fully that it is not merely private and personal, but that, in your own words, it embodies a tentative proposal. I am sure that you will agree with me that it is well that there should be no misunderstanding on the important points on which I have touched above."

The reader is familiar with the fact how Mohammad Ali Jinnah's famous letter written

to the Prime Minister of Great Britain regarding condition of business in the Round Table Conference served as a helpful suggestion to His Majesty's Government. The reader will no doubt be interested to know how in 1940 after a decade the phenomenon was repeated. The "Tentative Proposal" presented by the Muslim leader found an echo in the Viceroy's announcement of August 8, 1940. Jinnah was, therefore, to a great extent, satisfied with the Viceroy's announcement and set himself to work out the details in consultation with His Excellency. But the Viceroy could not supply any details as to the number of representatives, the creation of portfolios, and parties that were likely to come in the Executive Council; he only informed the Muslim leader that two seats could be given to the League. The negotiations therefore fell with a thud.

The August pronouncement and its amplification by the Secretary of State for India contained certain departures from the conventional attitude of His Majesty's Government towards India's constitutional advance. "His Majesty's Government's concern," said the Viceroy, "that full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision, has also been brought out. That remains the position of His Majesty's Government. It goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities, for the peace and welfare of India, to

any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life." Dealing with this aspect of the problem and the political importance of the Indian Congress, Mr. Amery said: "The Congress leaders are men inspired by an ardent national patriotism. They have built up a remarkable organisation, by far the most efficient political machine in India, of which they are justly proud. They have striven to make that organisation national and all-embracing. If only they had succeeded, if the Congress could, in fact, speak as it professes to speak for all main elements in India's national life then, however advanced their demands, our problem would have been in many respects far easier than it is today. It is true that they are numerically the largest single party in British India. But their claim in virtue of that fact, to speak for India is utterly denied by very important elements in India's complex national life. These other elements assert their right to be regarded not as mere numerical minorities but as separate constituent factors in any future Indian policy, entitled to be treated as such, in any discussions for the shaping of India's future constitution.

"The foremost among these elements stands the great Muslim community, of ninety million strong and constituting a majority both in North-Western and North-Eastern

India, but scattered as a minority over the whole sub-continent. In religious and social outlook, in historic tradition and culture, the difference between them and their Hindu fellow-countrymen goes as deep as, if not deeper than, any similar difference in Europe. That need not and does not prevent pleasant social intercourse of fruitful political co-operation. It has not, in fact, prevented individual Muslims taking an active part in the work of the Congress Party. But, as a body, the Muslims have stood aloof. Their quarrel with the scheme of the existing Act is not that it fails to give that clear majority rule which the Congress asks for, but that it would give too great powers to a Hindu majority at the Centre. They will have nothing to do with a constitution framed by a constituent assembly elected by a majority vote in geographical constituencies. They claim the right in any constitutional discussions to be regarded as an entity and are determined only to accept a constitution whose actual structure will secure their position as an entity against the operations of a mere numerical majority."

Talking about Indian unity, Mr. Amery remarked : "India cannot be unitary in the sense that we are in this island, but she can still be a unity. India's future house of freedom has room for many mansions." Emphasising the need of agreement between the

main political groups in India, Mr. Amery declared, " Agreement, consent, is indeed the foundation of all free government, of all true democracy. Decision by majority is not so much of the essence of democracy. Decision by majority is not so much of the essence of democracy as a practical convenience, which presupposes for its proper working an antecedent general consent to the constitution itself. It has, indeed, in most federal constitutions been limited in various ways in order to safeguard the separate interests of the federating elements. To describe the need for such agreement as a veto on constitutional progress is, I think, to do an injustice to the patriotism and sense of responsibility of those concerned. Agreement means not veto by any elements but compromise, and willingness to compromise in India, as elsewhere, is an essential test of the sense of responsibility on which free government must be based."

This was in fact an indication that Musalmans had made themselves felt by His Majesty's Government, and that the growing strength and influence of Jinnah were slowly being realised. This was a bitter pill for the Congress to swallow and a peep into the current events of India's political history show that the Congress engaged itself in a desperate struggle for winning power and supremacy over the League. There were two

courses open. The first was to give a vigorous opposition to the British Government and to threaten them with obstructing the war effort. The second was to contact League leaders in the various provinces and decoy Jinnah's lieutenants into co-operation with the Congress. The first course was adopted soon after the August pronouncement and the Congress Working Committee called upon "all Congress organisations to carry on their activities with full vigour and, in particular, to explain the Congress position and recent developments to the public. Satyagraha Committees must see that those who have taken the pledge act in terms of this pledge and carry on the constructive and other activities of the Congress." In these words the programme of individual civil disobedience was strengthened under the garb of national assertion, and on the pretext that it was conducted for the purpose of obtaining freedom of speech to carry on anti-war propaganda, because the Congress being a non-violent organisation was opposed to war.

The inspiration for the second course came from the British Government itself, who had followed a similar policy in connection with the establishment of the War Committees. A prominent Congressman had suggested: "Should the international situation worsen appreciably, Britain will make a strong bid for Congress good-will by trying

to meet its demands, very much more than half-way. On his present showing, Jinnah will not be overpleased with this development and would in all probability resort to obstruction. Britain will then turn to her faithful friend Sikandar Hayat Khan. Perhaps the good offices and the powerful support of the Agha Khan would also be available. Nor would Fazlul Haq, the Bengal Premier, be found unwilling. Jinnah would still be left a good enough following, but then will come to him the tragic realisation, how so many of the Khan Bahadurs and Knights and titled gentry, who are now dancing attendance on him, will drop away in an instant, at a sign from the British Government whose creatures they are. Jinnah would still be a notable factor, but only a factor, not the sole determinant. A Gandhi-Agha Khan-Sikandar-Fazlul Haq understanding would have a more far-reaching effect than the Lucknow Pact of 1916. Jinnah would either have to toe the line or stand in haughty aloofness, unable to change the course of history." Consequently the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, unknowingly, played into the hands of his Hindu colleagues and approached the Muslim Premiers of the Muslim Provinces. This attitude, therefore, was naturally resented by the Muslim leader, and he warned both the Congress and the British Government against making such an attempt.

At the first opportunity, therefore, in November he lodged his protest. "I am unable to accept that the Hindus and the Congress are fighting for the independence or freedom of the people of the country," said he. "We know why they have launched the civil disobedience movement. The British Government know why. It is to coerce the British Government to recognise the Congress as the only authoritative and representative organisation of the people of India. The Congress says: 'Come to a settlement with us. We are your friends; we desire to maintain your supremacy in this country. Come to terms with us and ignore the Musalmans and other minorities.' Mr. Bhulabhai Desai after he had an interview with Mr. Gandhi is reported to have appealed to Musalmans and other non-Congressmen not to put any obstacles in their way. He said in effect: 'Let the Congress fight this out in its own way.' May I ask the Congress High Command of which Mr. Desai is a member—he is also the Leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly—to tell us what are the war aims of the Congress against the British Government? We feel that the war aims of the Congress are to put all the pressure that they can on the British Government and coerce them, so that they may coerce us and let us down and throw us to the wolves. That is the war aim of the Congress. I ask them, why follow this ostrich policy? How

we possibly be deceived? The whole effort of the Congress seems to me to be like that of a bat which has entered a room and flies round and round knocking against the walls but will not, cannot, see that the door is wide open. What would the Musalmans do?" Jinnah declared: "It is, therefore, not possible for us to view this movement with equanimity. We must view it with serious anxiety. I say to Musalmans, please do not get mixed up or involved in this terrible situation, for which the Congress alone is responsible. But if we find at any time that our interests are at stake we cannot remain as onlookers and spectators but we shall play our part and intervene if necessary. Let that be understood."

In the same month speaking on the floor of the Legislative Assembly Jinnah emphatically declared: "And although I am pressed for time, I think I must tell the House the correct position. And I tell you and my Congress friends that they have still at the back of their mind the idea that the Congress and Congress alone represents the country, the people of India, the Indian nation, and so on; that they alone are the spokesmen, and that the Muslims and others are minorities. I say this on the floor of this House that the reason why there has not been a settlement between the Hindus and Musalmans is that the Congress is a Hindu

organisation, whatever they may say—that the Hindu leaders and Congress leaders have had always at the back of their minds the basis that the Musalmans have to come within the ken of the Congress and the Hindu raj, that they are a minority, and all that they can justly press for is merely safeguards as a minority, whereas let me tell gentlemen of the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party members that the Musalmans always had at their back the basis—and it has never been different during the last twenty-five years—that they are a separate entity."

Developing his argument and analysing Congress politics Jinnah remarked: "But then comes the statement of 8th of August and Mr. Amery's speech. That is now the crux. I do not say that the British Government could have done anything else. If they had done anything else, if they had been a party to throw the Muslims and other minorities at the mercy of the Congress, they would have left a dishonourable record in the history of this country. If they had done that, what would it have come to? That is really where I am fundamentally at variance with the Congress. They do not want the independence of India. I will read what Mr. Gandhi said. What they want is, under the overlordship of Britain, power and patronage to dominate the Muslims and rest of the minorities. This is what Mr. Gandhi

himself says, and it is a thing to which I cannot subscribe. It is my conviction and I am satisfied that that is his objective and aim.

"The article he wrote on the 29th of October is a proof positive thereof. Of course, Mr. Gandhi's articles and speeches are such that you can derive support for any proposition ; he is like the oracle of Delphi—but in order to understand Mr. Gandhi you have to study and go deep into the thing. This is what Mr. Gandhi said on the 29th of October last year after he had rejected the offer of the Viceroy : 'If to-day the British leave India, the Punjabis from the Punjab'—he might have honestly said Muslims—'and Gurkhas from the East will destroy the country. If, therefore, there could be anyone desirous of maintaining the supremacy of the British in India'—mark the words—'if, therefore, there could be anyone desirous of maintaining the supremacy of the British in India, it can only be the Congress.'

"Now comes the other operative part. 'It is the only authoritative and representative body of Indian people and of those Hindus who are, in spite of their majority, weak.'*

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*This quotation is not verbatim and is somewhat different from the original text of Gandhi's article. The mistake crept in because the correspondent who sent this quotation to Jinnah had perhaps obtained an Urdu version of

"I ask this House, I ask any intelligent man, what does this mean? On the 29th October last year, after the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee of the 10th October, within less than 20 days, Mr. Gandhi writes this article. That resolution, if you honestly believe in it, asks for complete independence: the right of the people of India to frame their own constitution by a constituent assembly to be elected by adult franchise. But here what does this mean? He was telling the British Government, 'You

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the article and therefore its rendering into English was bound to be different from the typical phraseology often employed by Gandhi. The correct version of the article in question, which Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan* on the 21st of October, 1939 under the caption of "The Fiction of Majority," is as follows:

"Consider for one moment, what can happen if the English were to withdraw all of a sudden and there was no foreign usurper to rule. It may be said that the Punjabis, be they Muslims, Sikhs or others, will overrun India. It is highly likely that the Gurkhas will throw in their lot with the Punjabis. Assume further that non-Punjabi Muslims will make common cause with the Punjabis. Where will the Congressmen, composed chiefly of Hindus, be? If they are still truly non-violent, they will be left unmolested by the warriors. Congressmen won't want to divide power with the warriors, but will refuse to let them exploit their unarmed countrymen. Thus, if anybody has cause to keep the British rule for protection from the stronger element, it is the Congressmen and those Hindus and others who are represented by the Congress. The question, therefore, resolves itself into not who is numerically superior, but who is stronger. Surely, there is only one answer. Those who raise the cry of minority in danger have nothing to fear from the so-called majority which is merely a paper-majority and which, in any event, is ineffective because it is weak in the military sense."

settle with me, I am more desirous to maintain your supremacy here than the Punjabis and the Gurkhas.' Mr. Gandhi became a convert, a complete convert, to this artistic resolution of the 10th October when he found that this was not going to do the trick, and when he realised it, he became a convert and he found that it was a panacea for all and every kind of ills the people of India are suffering from. What was the panacea? The constituent Assembly. This went on. When this constituent Assembly was beaten and dead, then we come to what the Leader of Opposition emphasised to-day most—I believe the Congress Delhi resolution. What is it? He only mentioned a part of it. He did not emphasise the first part of it. The first part of it—correct me if I am wrong—declares "complete independence of India and freedom with a right to frame its own constitution by a constituent Assembly,' etc., etc. And mind you, it is a conjunctive *and* not *or* 'provisional national government at the Centre responsible to the elected members of this House'."

After this, Jinnah's statements were either in the shape of appeals to the Congress leadership for better sense and wisdom, or consisted of protests against their policy of civil disobedience which went unheeded; and his visit to Karachi at the end of the year 1940 confirmed his views that the "one aim of the

Congress in this province seems particularly to create disruption and disunity between Muslims, although a large body of Hindus disapprove of it and in fact are opposed to such manoeuvres. This is most unfortunate and, what is more, it is perfectly futile and will not succeed. There is not the slightest doubt that Muslims are solidly behind the Muslim League in this province and Hindus of this province will not encourage or support these machinations of the Congress. I sincerely hope that thoughtful and better mind of Hindus will work together with Muslims peacefully and for a real advance and betterment of the people of this province. I am confident and it is obvious that nothing on earth will prevent the Muslim League being organised, and why should not the Muslim League organise itself? There is a Congress party in the Assembly, and outside there is a Hindu party. What is wrong in the Muslims organising themselves and establishing a party in the Legislature and augmenting and strengthening the Muslim League outside the Legislature? I sincerely hope that in the paramount interests of this province better counsels will prevail."

Jinnah had now become the ideal of the Muslim students and a hero of Muslim masses and all the time he was pulled by the two and pressed by invitations from different parts of India. In March 1941 he was taken

by the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation to Lahore, who had organised a Special Pakistan Session and soon after had to go to Aligarh to address the Muslim University Union. In April the Musalmans of Cawnpore were impatient to hear him and he had to accede to their request. At Cawnpore his programme of engagements was so crowded that he had hardly any time for rest. No less than thirty-two addresses were presented to him in one day, and, as he told the author, he had never before seen so many people as gathered there to hear him. These busy days told upon his health and when he reached Bombay he had a touch of fever.

The annual session of the All-India Muslim League was being held at Madras in April and Jinnah had to attend it. Notwithstanding his indifferent health, therefore, he started for Madras. The heat of South India and the inconvenience that a war-time journey generally causes further aggravated the effects of the strain from which he was already suffering. On the way he fainted in the railway compartment. Immediate medical aid was, however, provided by the Railway authorities and he was advised that he should not undergo further strain. At Madras, therefore, he left the special train kept ready for his reception. The state drive and procession prepared by the people of Madras in his honour, were led by other leaders in his stead. The Madras

League and subsequent events in the Madras Presidency showed to what length the message of Jinnah and his influence had already spread. People had come to Madras from hundreds of miles and many had even walked distances of scores of miles just to have a glimpse of their leader. And when they were told that he was not well enough to see them, they bowed down before the Almighty to pray for his health.

In the midst of popular demonstrations, Jinnah opened his presidential address orally in English, and kept them in a state of rapt attention for nearly two hours. In this speech Jinnah rose to the heights of his oratorical powers. His address will go down as one of his most masterly and magnificent utterances. In this speech Jinnah took in his sweep the entire gamut of the Indian political situation with pertinent references to the world situation. He elucidated beyond all shadow of doubt the goal, the ideology, and the policy of the Muslim League, surveyed the five-year progress of the League and its attitude towards the war situation, foreshadowed the next five-year plan, and made pointed criticism about the policy of the British Government, and also the policy and manoeuvres of the Congress, the Mahasabha and the latest offshoot of the Congress, the Sapru Conference. The speech illustrates another quality of Jinnah —a feature all too rare in Indian leadership—

namely, he means what he says and he says what he means. It is singularly free from sloppy sentimentality, vague verbosity and pontifical sermonising. He speaks as one who knows both the strength and the shortcomings of his followers; his speech is a correct measure of the tempo, the tendency, the aspiration and the determination of the Muslim nation. No wonder the audience at Madras, numbering 100,000 strong, were electrified by his soul-moving yet eminently sensible speech.*

During the intervening period Indian political activity had progressed fast. The Congress attitude towards war had softened and then became stiff again. A No-Party Leaders' Conference had been set up at Bombay under the leadership of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in order to cultivate the British Government on behalf of the Congress under the pretext of finding a suitable solution of the political deadlock. Rajagopalacharia, a prominent member of the Congress from Madras, had flung a "sporting offer" to Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, that Hindus would not mind Mohammad Ali Jinnah becoming the Prime Minister of India, provided he was made responsible to the legislature in a "national government." Dealing with all

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* Jamiluddin Ahmad: *Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah.*

these machinations of the Congress, Jinnah asked: "What are the demands of the Congress?" And he went on answering the poser by stating that the demand was "the declaration of immediate and unconditional independence and freedom of India with power to the people of India, by a constituent Assembly, to be elected by adult franchise to frame their own constitution—of course, to the satisfaction of the minorities. How that will be brought about, heaven alone knows. I do not know." This was the demand of the Congress and when they found it was not going to wash—the British Government ought to be grateful to the Muslim League for saving them the maximum amount of trouble the Congress was determined to give them, and he believed that in their heart of hearts the British people were grateful to the Muslim League—they thought of a flanking movement. The Congress found that the British Government would not possibly accept the demand. For the Muslims it meant complete destruction if that demand was conceded without a Hindu-Muslim settlement. Therefore, naturally, the Muslim League opposed it tooth and nail. There were minorities also who were concerned with their own status, like the Scheduled Classes, the Christians and so on. The result was that Gandhi and the Congress found to their unexpected astonishment a strong opposition to the Congress demand. So the Congress

thought that if they could not get what they wanted by a frontal attack, they should try a flanking movement.

What was the flanking movement? Jinnah asked. He replied by saying, "another resolution." Jinnah here explained that as soon as the Congress passed a resolution, there would be commentators and interpreters. The explanation of the meaning of a resolution would go on for weeks and weeks and by the time the commentators had finished, yards and yards of statements would have been issued. They went from Delhi to Wardha, from Wardha to Delhi, from Delhi to Poona and so on. So when they found that the "Muslim League was the power which was holding up their diabolical machinations," they tried the flanking movement at Poona, in place of the frontal attack. The "change" in Poona was only a change in name. The flanking movement had a plan and a strategy which was designed at Poona under the great general, because Jinnah did not believe that Gandhi was not a party to it. "The Congress," said Jinnah, "was willing to throw overboard the general, Mr. Gandhi, provided the British Government will do this, namely, make a declaration of immediate independence and the freedom of India unconditionally and the future constitution, the final constitution to be framed after the war, but the provisional constitution

should be a 'National Government' at the Centre, responsible to a Hindu-dominated Legislature. That was the Poona proposal and Mr. Gandhi, of course, was seemingly thrown overboard. And Mr. Kripalani, Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, said that they went to the length of 'selling the leader'. They sold their leader, and Ahimsa which was their creed was also buried in the City of Poona, because the Congress was ready to assist the British in the prosecution of the war and the defence of India. What was *haram*, as we say, became *halal* at Poona."

Jinnah referred to the Bombay Conference and its proposals. He said that the Hindu Mahasabha had already repudiated and disowned the Conference. He thought that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru "on his own admission" had been a "political orphan" for a very long time. This "political orphan" had been caught in a trap, because there was one obsession with him that in the event of supreme danger for India, he alone, as the "supreme intellect," could rescue India. His motives might be good; his intentions might be good. "But I am afraid," Mohammad Ali Jinnah said, "the Sapru Conference was like a Dutch army without any privates and I think the correct answer of the League was given in that very Conference by the clear-headed, Hindu, experienced political leader,

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. If Sir Tej Bahadur had only followed his advice, he would have saved himself. What shall I say to this pose which is now thrust upon him by the wire-pullers from behind? The Bombay proposal is nothing but, in another name, the flanking movement and a second edition of the Poona proposal of a so-called National Government." If anybody read the memorandum explaining the Bombay resolution, Jinnah said, there could be no doubt left in him. He did not wish to go into the details of the Bombay resolution and the memorandum. But he would tell them as shortly as he could that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was entirely on the wrong path, on the wrong line, and Jinnah was sorry that Sir Tej had been caught in the trap by the wire-pullers and other organisations behind this move.

Winding up his speech, Jinnah uttered what he himself characterised as "a note of warning," in slow and deliberate accents. "I think I have taken much more time of yours than I thought I would," he concluded, "but it seems to me that I can only wind up on a note—a note which is really of warning, to the British Government; because, after all, they are in possession of this land and the Government of this sub-continent. Please stop," he declared, "please stop your policy of appeasement towards those who are bent upon frustrating the war effort, doing their

best to oppose the prosecution of the war and the defence of India at this critical moment. Do you want at this moment to place them in a superior and dominant position now and after the war? Change the corner-stone of the British policy in this country. You are not loyal to those who are willing to stand by you and who sincerely desire to support you. But you desire to placate those who have the greatest nuisance-value in political and economic fields. Give up the dominant feature of this policy and the character of this policy. It is that you are trying to get on with those who do not want to get on with you. If you want honestly the support and the co-operation of Muslim India, place your cards on the table and take action."

After the Madras session of the League a long controversy arose between Jinnah and Sapru. The latter's release of the correspondence between himself and Gandhi on the question of a Hindu-Muslim settlement brought forward the point clearly that Gandhi was in no mood to encourage or take part in the solution of the problem and that he was biding his time for something else.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE FALSE KEY

His Excellency the Viceroy was now in a fix. The policy of expanding the Executive Council had been laid down. The Congress had "refused even to discuss the matter and proceeded to launch a curious campaign of Mr. Gandhi's devising." The Muslim League was willing to take the responsibility but perhaps it did not go well with British policy to take Muslim leadership alone into confidence. The proposals of the Sapru Conference had no sanction behind them. The only course, therefore, was to proceed with the expansion of the Council in spite of these organisations and approach individuals who could be made to stand by the British policy regardless public opinion and their party affiliations. India is a country where persons of this non-descript character are found in abundance. They are the products of sustained and systematic British efforts. The result was that on the 21st of July 1941, a *communique* announced the names of the members of the expanded Executive Council and the new "National Defence Council."

The Viceroy, however, wished to communicate his decision to Mohammad Ali

Jinnah previous to its publication and his message came through the Governor of Bombay, Sir Roger Lumley, who was at the time at Ganeshkhind, the summer headquarters of the Governor. Sir Roger Lumley made a telephone call to Jinnah and requested him to see him, but the latter being indisposed, could do so only after he had recovered his health. Sir Roger then sent the Viceregal message through an official messenger in the form of a letter, to which the Muslim leader replied at once making a vigorous protest against the inclusion of some of the members of the League as the reader will have the occasion to see presently. But, after the decision of the Viceroy was made public, Jinnah had to clear his position and demand an explanation from his followers who had acted contrary to the declared policy of the League and issued the following statement to the press :

"The *communique* announcing the decision regarding the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the so-called National Defence Council is to be most deeply regretted. It will not secure the whole-hearted, willing and genuine support if that is what is honestly required, of Muslim India, for the simple reason that the persons chosen and nominated by the Viceroy are neither real representatives of the people nor will they command the confidence and trust of the

Muslims. The statesmanship of the Viceroy is leading him from one mistake to another, and it is most unfortunate, and it is very painful to note that the Viceroy should have canvassed members of the Muslim League over the head of the leader and the executive of the party, and it is still more painful that some of the members of the League should have succumbed. When the offer of the Viceroy was made last August it was not acceptable to the All-India Muslim League on the unanswerable ground that it did not give the representatives of the Muslim League a real and substantial share in the authority and power of the Government. How can anyone consider that the present retrograde decision would secure the approval and co-operation of Muslim India? I congratulate the Viceroy on having created defections in the ranks of the Muslim League by securing the services of the Muslim League Premiers and some other members of the League who have associated themselves with this scheme without reference or knowledge of the leader or the executive of the organisation. This will not, in any way, make the Muslim League swerve from its declared policy and these manoeuvres will not help the Government but on the contrary will create bitterness which fortunately did not exist, however emphatically we had disapproved of the policy that had been pursued by the Government in this behalf before the present announcement. The action and the

conduct of the Muslim League Premiers and the members of the League who have associated themselves with this scheme without reference and knowledge of the executive of the League in the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the constitution of the National Defence Council, as announced in the *communique,* will have to be considered and dealt with as soon as possible."

The question concerning the members of the League joining the Executive Council and the National Defence Council was discussed at the meeting of the League Working Committee in August. It was a matter now of the prestige of the Muslim organisation and the test of the strength of Jinnah. Hindus were eagerly looking forward for a clash between the League and the British Government or at any rate between Jinnah and his lieutenants. It was hoped that Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan of the Punjab, Sir Mohammad Saadullah of Assam and Maulvi Fazlul Haq of Bengal would revolt against the League. Punjab officialdom had already managed to send a few members of the Punjab League in the form of a delegation to the President of the All-India Muslim League with a view to vindicating the action of Sir Sikandar in joining the Defence Council under the pretext that the Muslim Premiers joined in their official capacity and that their action did not amount to flouting the mandate

of the League, since it had allowed its Provincial Branches to continue their activities in support of the war effort. But the letter from the Governor of Bombay containing the message of the Viceroy to Jinnah had a different story to tell. Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, had also made frank statements in the House of Commons that the inclusion of these Muslims was meant to demonstrate to the world that " the great Muslim community " was behind the war effort in spite of the Viceroy turning down the offer of the All-India Muslim League. The position was, therefore, quite clear. Had this attitude of the British Government gone unchallenged it would have meant that Musalmans were not actually behind the League but were willing to dance to the tune of the Viceroy. During the meeting of the Working Committee, therefore, the League President had no difficulty in convincing Sir Sikandar and others that Muslim Premiers were wrong in joining the National Defence Council. Sir Sikandar, therefore, resigned from the Council forthwith. Sir Mohammad Saadullah of Assam also followed suit. Maulvi Fazlul Haq, who could not attend the Working Committee hesitated a little bit, but ultimately fell in with the others.

The Government of India tried to explain away the whole affair and issued a *communique.* In reply to that Mohammad Ali

Jinnah issued the following statement to the press:

"The explanation that has been given, presumably on behalf of Lord Linlithgow, in the *communique* dated August 27, 1941, from Simla, regarding the recent decision of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, and the statement which has been issued by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, consequent on his resignation from the National Defence Council, is a lengthy and wordy explanation of points, other than the real and vital one, which forms the basis of the resignation of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, namely, that according to the text of the message of His Excellency the Viceroy, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was appointed as a representative of the great Muslim community. This message I received through the Governor of Bombay on the morning of July 21 and replied to it on the same day. It is surprising that no reference whatever has been made to it in the whole of the *communique.*

" The statement of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan runs as follows: 'I was surprised, however, to find that in the letter dated July 21 last, from the Governor of Bombay to Mr. Jinnah, communicating to him a message from His Excellency the Viceroy, an entirely different complexion had been put on the basis of appointment of the Muslim Premiers on this

Council, and *inter alia* it was stated that we were being appointed to the Defence Council as representatives of the great Muslim community . . . . . I could not, in fairness to my province or the Muslim League, continue to serve on this Council.'

" According to Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Viceroy was double-crossing him. That point is not met in the whole of the *communique*. Had he asked Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan to join the Council in his personal capacity, the probability is so obvious that he would have refused, or, at any rate, asked for time to consult the leader and the Executive of the Muslim League organisation.

" This, evidently, did not suit the Viceroy to put it to him in that way, and he was sworn to strict secrecy.

" It is somewhat difficult to understand why the Working Committee has been dragged in the *communique*. The position of the Working Committee has been made quite clear by its resolution that the gentlemen concerned had clearly associated themselves with the scheme and thereby gone against the express decision and mandate of the League, and without any reference to the leader or the Executive of the organisation. The decision of the Working Committee, therefore, was that they should

resign from the National Defence Council. It is quite immaterial whether they accepted the invitation in their official capacity or otherwise.

"The various stages of the development of this plea that these gentlemen were appointed in their official capacity as Premiers, ending with the statement of the Secretary of State for India, which he was at pains to make on August 19, 1941, were merely intended to create confusion among the Muslim public and in the deliberations of the Working Committee, which was called upon to decide as to what action should be taken in the matter.

"Lastly, there is a reference of His Excellency the Viceroy in the *communique*, to the conversation that he had with me on August 16, 1941. It is quite correct that he informed me that these gentlemen were invited in their official capacity; but in fairness to me it also ought to have been stated as to what was my reply. Here I give the substance of it. I said: 'It was quite immaterial to the real issue nevertheless, it is the first time I hear, on your authority, that they were invited in their official capacity; and even after my reply to your message which you must have received on the 21st or the 22nd, you did not suggest that they were appointed in their official capacity till to-day.'

I pointed out to him that this was quite contrary to the message that he was good enough to send to me through the Governor of Bombay. The text of the message did not leave the slightest doubt that they were appointed essentially as representatives of the great Muslim community, because they were Muslims of the highest eminence and capacity. I asked him to send for the copy of his message that he had sent to me and verify what I was saying, to which he replied that he would look it up.

"I think, in fairness to all parties concerned, that I should release to the press the full text of his message and my reply to it.

Confidential Government House
Ganeshkhind, July 20, 1941

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

His Excellency the Viceroy has asked me to let you know his intentions on the matters which follow. I had hoped that I would be able to see you myself in order that I might convey this message to you personally, as was his desire, but, unfortunately, now that I am in a position to give you the message, I am not entirely fit, and I am therefore writing to convey it to you by this letter, which I am sending down to Bombay by messenger.

The Viceroy has continued to have very much in mind the whole situation in regard to the war effort and the association of non-official opinion with the prosecution of the war. The obstacles, however, to any settlement on the basis of the complete offer of August last, which emerged so clearly during the discussions last autumn, still exist, to his very great regret, as the last few months, and the reactions to the Secretary of State's statement in the House of Commons on April 22, have made clear. In these circumstances, it is equally clear that he cannot look for that degree of support from the major parties, for the proposals embodied in the August offer, which he desires. Nevertheless, the burden of the conduct of the war on the Central Government has greatly increased, and for administrative reasons it is essential to proceed with some increase in the membership of the Viceroy's Council within the terms of the August offer. The Viceroy, accordingly, is anxious that you should know that he is now, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, creating five new portfolios.

These new portfolios, and the names of the gentlemen by whom they have been accepted, are as follows: Supply:

Sir Homi Mody. Information: Sir Akbar Hydari. Civil Defence: Mr. Raghavendra Rao. Indian Overseas: Mr. Aney. Labour: Sir Firoz Khan Noon.

The Viceroy would also like you to know that he proposes to fill the vacancies arising in the portfolio of Law when Sir Zafarullah Khan goes to the Federal Court, and in the portfolio of Education when Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai takes up a mission overseas, by the appointment of Sir Sultan Ahmad and Mr. Sarkar.

In addition, the Viceroy does not feel that, because of the difficulty in securing the support of the major political parties, it is possible to delay further the more active association of non-official Indian opinion with the prosecution of the war. He is accordingly establishing, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, a National Defence Council. The Council will consist of some thirty members, nine of whom will be drawn from the Indian States. The Viceroy regards it as essential that the great Muslim community should be represented on that Council by persons of the highest prominence and capacity. He has,

accordingly, invited the Premiers of Assam, Bengal, the Punjab and Sind to serve as members on it, and he has extended invitations also to certain other prominent Muslims, such as Sir Mohammad Usman. He has considered whether he should invite you to let him have any suggestions as to the possible personnel for this Council, but being aware, as he is, of your general attitude, he has concluded that it would be preferable not to embarrass you by inviting you to make suggestions.

It is intended that an announcement about these changes will be made on the morning of Tuesday, July 22, and the Viceroy is anxious that you should have, through me, this advance information of what is proposed. I would have much preferred to have given you this message orally, but this letter contains the substance of it.

I hope that you have now fully recovered from your recent illness.

Yours sincerely
Roger Lumley

M. A. Jinnah Esq.
Bar-at-Law, M.L.A.
Mount Pleasant Road, Malabar Hill,
Bombay.

Jinnah's Reply

Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill,
July 21, 1941

Dear Sir Roger,

I am in receipt of your letter of July 20, 1941, which embodies the message of His Excellency the Viceroy. I deeply regret the decision taken by him with the approval of His Majesty's Government. I appreciate when he says that he does not wish to embarrass me by inviting me to make suggestions, knowing, as he does, not only my general attitude but that of the All-India Muslim League. Further, I cannot approve of his having invited the Muslim League Premiers or any other Muslim Leaguer under the scheme of the expansion of the Viceroy's Council as well as what is now called the National Defence Council, because it is obvious that it would embarrass the Muslim League organisation, and I do hope and trust that His Excellency will avoid such a contingency. Besides, it is hardly fair or proper that they should be approached by His Excellency over the head of the President and the Executive of the All-India Muslim League, knowing full

well the position and the attitude that the All-India Muslim League has adopted.

It is stated in his message that the Viceroy regards it as essential that the 'great Muslim community should be represented by persons of the highest prominence and capacity.' Would it be creditable for any individual prominent or capable Muslim, belonging to an organisation, to accept the invitation contrary to the position and the attitude taken up by that organisation, and would it do any credit to the Government if they succeed in alluring him and create a breach in the organisation, in the hope that he may throw up his allegiance to the party to which he belongs in order to accept the invitation of His Excellency? I maintain that the great Muslim community is represented authoritatively only by the All-India Muslim League organisation. Persistence in the course will not improve matters, but on the contrary it will lead to bitterness on the part of the Muslim League which up to the present moment, fortunately, does not exist, however emphatically we have disapproved of the policy which has been pursued by His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy.

Before I conclude, I am extremely sorry to hear that you are not well, and I hope that you will soon recover from your illness.

Thanking you for your kind inquiries. I am now much better.

Yours sincerely
M. A. Jinnah

His Excellency Sir Roger Lumley
Governor, Bombay.

Letter from Sir Roger Lumley to Mohammad Ali Jinnah

Government House,
Ganeshkhind, July 22, 1941

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you for your letter of July 21, the contents of which I have passed on to the Viceroy.

I am glad to hear you have recovered. Thanks for your kind inquiry. I am much better.

Yours sincerely
Roger Lumley

M. A. Jinnah Esq.

The Hindu press, Hindu leaders and the British Government were aghast at the result of the League decision, and political circles were bewildered at the statesmanship and political sagacity of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the remarkable strength that the incident demonstrated was behind him. Innumerable messages of appreciation came from all parts of India including his Hindu friends and some very prominent Congress-men. The Hindu press in many cases could not but admire the independent character and patriotism of the great Muslim leader.

The position for the All-India Muslim League was, however, none too pleasant. The events that followed were unparalleled in the history of India and perhaps in the history of any other country. All forces that were directly or indirectly affected had combined together against the League. It so happened that although Fazlul Haq had resigned he had given indication that he had done so most reluctantly and not out of conviction; and almost immediately he showered epithets on the League and its President. Mr. Haq had been indirectly assured of the support of other elements that were against the League. The members of the League took great exception to Mr. Haq's out-burst and Jinnah was once again flooded with letters. There were clearly two groups in Bengal—one favoured the postponement of

any definite decision, the other demanded Fazlul Haq's immediate expulsion from the League. Mohammad Ali Jinnah personally was inclined to give a long rope to the Bengal Premier in order to enable him to retrace his steps in the interest of the League and the Musalmans. And some time later at Jinnah's instance the League Working Committee after having received a letter from Fazlul Haq of implied apology treated the matter as closed.

But for Fazlul Haq, obviously, the matter remained still open and towards the close of the year 1941, he along with one of his colleagues, the Nawab of Dacca, deserted the League Party in the Bengal Assembly and started a new party in coalition with the Congress and other Hindu groups without any reference to the League either local or central. The European group in the Bengal Assembly too threw in their lot with Fazlul Haq. The new coalition, therefore, demonstrated beyond doubt that the Congress on the one hand and the British Government on the other were out to destroy the influence that the League had come to acquire in Bengal. Jinnah, therefore, demanded from Fazlul Haq an explanation of his conduct and the latter adopted his usual dilatory tactics. The whole of Bengal had now stood up against the "Bengal Tiger." It had become almost impossible for him

to come out in public, and so much was the public disapproval of him that one of the Bengal leaders said that in future Muslims would dread to give the future sons of Bengal the name Fazlul Haq. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was, therefore, pressed by Muslim Bengal to do away with him and consequently he expelled Fazlul Haq from the League in the month of December after due opportunities given for defence.

The curious attitude adopted by the Congress in Bengal in supporting Fazlul Haq was not surprising to those who understood the Congress game. The Congress High Command had followed a similar policy in other Muslim provinces. Analysing all these events Jinnah made the following remarks during his presidential address at the annual session of the All-India Muslim Students' Federation at Nagpur in December 1941.

"The Congress is against any war effort," said he. "They must preach and shout slogans for the prevention of war effort. But what have they done in Sind? There the Congress Party is supporting Mr. Allah Bux, although he is supporting the war effort. Not only is he supporting the war effort, but he has actually accepted the nomination in that so-called National Defence Council. When the question was raised, Mr. Gandhi left it conveniently to the Parliamentary Committee. And this Parliamentary

Committee decided that 'the peculiar circumstances of Sind were such that the Congress Party should not withdraw the support from the Premier, Mr. Allah Bux.'

"What did the Congress Party do in Assam? They are willing to support Mr. Chowdhry who mysteriously left the coalition party of which he was a member of the ministry. He has formed another party. What is the position of the Congress? They were ready and willing to support the ministry of Mr. Chowdhry. But the monkey came in to do justice between the two cats and Section 93, instead, has come in. Now both Sir Saadullah and Mr. Chowdhry can go to rest.

"And in Bengal, what is the Congress Party doing? The Congress Party has supported this new coalition ministry formed by Mr. Haq, and by virtue of it he was able to form a Government and continue to be the Premier. It was by virtue of Mr. Haq being Premier that Lord Linlithgow announced that the latter will now have the honour of the support of this great Premier, who will now be, as Premier of Bengal, a member of this so-called National Defence Council. The Congress is supporting him.

"Now I make a Christmas gift of Mr. Haq to Lord Linlithgow. I make another

New Year's gift of the Nawab of Dacca to the Governor of Bengal. I am very glad and I am happy that Muslim India is rid of these men who are guilty of the grossest treachery and betrayal of the Muslims. This shows that no man is indispensable to our organisation. If he is a traitor or a quisling he must be expelled. We shall now march more honourably and become stronger when we have weeded out this class of treacherous individuals. Now no power on earth can stop us from going forward and growing strong.

"My young friends," continued Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "with regard to the British Government and the League, I think I need not take up much of your time. Our position has been made repeatedly clear. Only the day before yesterday I issued a statement to the *News Chronicle* clarifying our position. Our position is just and I have no doubt it will continue to be so. I think no man, who has got the slightest sense of justice and fairness, can blame us. Our position has been that we recognise the common danger to Britain and India. We recognise the common peril. In the interests of our own people and to protect our own homes and hearths, we are willing to take our share in this peril. But we cannot do that successfully unless we are placed in a position of having real and genuine share in the responsibility and authority of the Government at the Centre and in the Provinces.

"The British Government is responsible for wasting these more than two years, and I think that if they go on delaying like this, they will regret and rue the day for allowing this sincere, honest and straightforward offer of the Muslim League to lapse."

This was of course the criticism of the opponents of the League and of those who were obstructing the realisation of the just aspirations of the Musalmans. He deplored the state of affairs and in a pathetic strain Jinnah appealed to his audience to cheer up and to his opponents to give up their futile attempts of obstruction. He spoke with lucidity that always marks his public orations and with the depth of feelings that occasions them.

"We feel that we have no friends. We feel that we are surrounded by opponents from all directions, and particularly about your province let me say a word. You are only four per cent in this province and you have gone through, as I said and as I anticipated in my speech as far back as 1937 at Lucknow, you have gone through the crucible of fire in this province. You have suffered. You are only four per cent in this province where an experiment is made of a new technique in the special laboratory of Wardha.*

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*Wardha Scheme of Education.

"No possible means were spared to terrorise you, to hurl you down. Of course it is obvious that the policy that was pursued was not only unjust, not only unfair, but most cowardly to terrorise four per cent of the population.

"There is no reason for you to be dejected. I tell you from this platform that I never felt more proud in my life than when I saw and heard and read about the magnificent stand that the Muslims of this province took. Suffer we have to. No nation was built and ever achieved its ambition without suffering and sacrifice. Therefore, it is obvious that this wretched constitution which was enacted in 1935, and even the provincial part of it, has been dismal failure in this country. We shall have to revise our notions and our ideals. But I want the Muslims of this province to be cheerful and keep a stout heart, and I assure you that nothing will succeed which is unjust, unfair and dishonest.

"I was telling you," continued Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "that so far as the Muslim League is concerned we are going faster than many people imagine. In our unity, in our solidarity and in our progress in various directions, all that I urge upon you, my young friends and others present here, is that the key is in your hands. Do not depend upon anybody. You know, I will not preach

aggressiveness. The Muslim League has always been on the defensive. I have always said it. It is no concession and it is no favour.

"I have always said that we have no designs on the Hindu community or any other of the sister communities. But we cannot and we shall not surrender or submit to their domination and their *raj* in this sub-continent. Look at the position now. You find on the one hand the present political situation and how the different organisations—Hindu organisations—are active. You have got, in the first instance, the most powerful and the best organised Hindu body, the Congress.

"I cannot understand," said Jinnah, "that even to-day the Congress leaders have not the honesty and the frankness to recognise that they do not represent the Muslims. What is the use of talking about the *divine Rashtrapati*, taking him as a show-boy? Whom are you misleading except yourselves? Whom are you deluding except yourselves? You know, I know, the world knows, that to-day there is no doubt left in the mind of any man who has got a grain of common-sense that the All-India Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organisation of the Muslims. Bardoli is still in darkness and I pray from Nagpur, in the vicinity of Wardha and Sevagram, that God may throw some light on Bardoli."

CHAPTER XXVII

CRIPPS MISSION AND AFTER

After the expulsion of Fazlul Haq from the League the situation in Bengal had become very acute. The Bengal Muslim leaders had hitherto thought that as they were in the seat of power it would not be difficult to organise their province whenever they wished, and had, therefore, neglected the work of rousing political consciousness among the people. But when it was found that they could be betrayed by their own men they woke up to the realities and in order to achieve the object in the shortest possible time appealed to Mohammad Ali Jinnah to visit Bengal and preside over the Provincial Muslim League Conference in February, which he consequently did at Serajganj. During the course of his presidential address, Mohammad Ali Jinnah outlined the various forces that were working in Bengal and also throughout India against the League and the vital interests of Musalmans. He explained at length the tactics that Fazlul Haq had adopted in his political game in order to maintain his leadership in the Bengal Assembly. He pointed out the character of the Haq Ministry that was then functioning in Bengal and exposed the hand that the local Governor

had in the affairs. Jinnah placed before his audience the position of the League, and gave an account of the League activities, elucidated the Muslim goal of Pakistan and the Muslim attitude towards the future constitutional problem of India. In fact his Serajganj speech shows what remarkable grasp Jinnah has over Indian politics and in view of the autobiographical importance of this speech it is appended at the end of this book. (Appendix V).

The entry of Japan into the war and the dangers that were brought to India by the Japanese successes mark the early part of the year 1942. The surrender of Singapore on February 15, the withdrawal from Rangoon on March 7, the capture by the Japanese of the Andaman Islands on March 23 and the bombing of Vizagapatam and Cocanada on April 6, had already tended to influence the Congress opinion and of the British. Further, the growing menace of Japanese aggression in the East Indies and Philippines and on the Burma front, the escape from India of Subhas Chandra Bose, probably to Japan, and the claim of a few Hindu leaders for a cultural affinity with Asiatic and Oriental countries had to a great extent changed the complexion of Indian politics, and consequently the war began to be viewed from a different angle altogether. It had moved the Congress High Command to

relax their policy towards non-violence a bit, but the fundamental question of forming a so-called national government at the Centre was not given up. The attitude of ignoring the wishes of other important elements in India, particularly of the Musalmans, was also not altered. In fact, some of the Congress Hindus were seriously considering the alternative of a possible occupation of India by the Japanese.

The British Parliament was also naturally much perturbed and it was contemplated that an all-out attempt must be made for consolidating and mobilising all forces of India for the successful prosecution of the war. It was rumoured that under the impact of the Japanese onslaught, the British Parliament would make a departure from their declared policy towards Indian constitutional problem. The declaration made by Mohammad Ali Jinnah regarding such a move, therefore, came as a timely warning to all concerned. "If any new declaration is made on the part of the British Government, departing from the declaration of August 8, 1940, as to the future constitution of India, or any proposal or move, which in any way would militate against the Muslim demand for Pakistan, or prejudge it, or denounce it in any way, as seems to be the main effort of the Hindu leaders, it will not only create an unprecedented catastrophe but result in grave disaster

at this critical juncture of the war and war efforts, apart from the fact that it will constitute a gross breach of faith with Muslim India," said he. "Muslim India is fighting and struggling for survival and for its right to self-determination, whereas the Congress and other Hindu organisations are speeding to assume supremacy and domination over the Muslims as an All-India minority by establishing one Central Government over the whole of India, and thus to dominate and control even those zones where the Muslims are in a solid majority and interfere even in their internal affairs by virtue of the vital powers which must remain vested in the Central Government, such as Defence, Communications, Customs and Finance and various other executive and administrative powers."

It was in these circumstances that the British Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons that Sir Stafford Cripps was to proceed to India with the Draft Declaration that embodied the unanimous views of the War Cabinet regarding the Indian deadlock. A full account of the various stages of negotiations between Sir Stafford Cripps and Indian leaders and their final result have already been fully explained by Professor R. Coupland of the Oxford University in his pamphlet, *The Cripps Mission*. The Professor was at the time in

India and assisted Sir Stafford in his stupendous task. A casual mention of the Cripps Proposals is, however, necessary here specially as far as they concern Jinnah and his political activity.

The announcement of Cripps Mission created a sense of triumph in the Congress ranks, as Sir Stafford had many friends among the Congressmen including Jawaharlal Nehru. His remarks in the past about the Muslim League bitterly criticising its policy had, on the other hand, alarmed Muslim India considerably. On the 23rd of March, which synchronised with the celebration of "Pakistan Day" and with Sir Stafford's arrival in New Delhi, Jinnah declared that Musalmans were afraid of the fact that Sir Stafford was a friend of the Congress who had given out his preconceived notion against the League. He had enjoyed the hospitality of Jawaharlal Nehru at Anand Bhawan. That was all true, but Musalmans should not be afraid on that score. He appealed to Muslim India not to get "cold feet." He made it clear that Sir Stafford Cripps had come to India not in his personal capacity but as a representative of the British Government. He, therefore, advised the Musalmans to be patient until the proposal, the offer or the scheme of His Majesty's Government which Sir Stafford had brought with him, was put forward before them.

He assured his audience that if this scheme or proposal were detrimental to the interests of Muslims, they would never accept it. He warned the Government, at the same time, against an attempt to suppress the Muslim League or create disruption among their ranks.

The document which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India and published on March 30, covered two periods, the immediate period after the end of hostilities, when a constitution-making body was to establish an Indian Union, and the interim war period, when the Executive Council, under the existing Constitution, was to be composed, with the exception of the Defence Member, of leaders of the Indian political parties, until such time as the constitution-making body had completed its work. The Draft Declaration ran as follows:

"The conclusions of the British War Cabinet as set out below are those which Sir Stafford Cripps has taken with him for discussion with the Indian leaders and the question as to whether they will be implemented will depend upon the outcome of these discussions which are now taking place.

"His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this

country and in India as to the fulfilment of the promises made in regard to the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realisation of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, associated with the United Kingdom and the other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown, but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its demestic or external affairs.

"His Majesty's Government, therefore, make the following declaration :

"(*a*) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

"(*b*) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the constitution-making body.

"(*c*) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to :

(*i*) the right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept

the new Constitution to retain its present constitutional position provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides. With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as Indian Union, and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down;

(*ii*) the signing of a Treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This Treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it will make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other Member States of the British Commonwealth.

Whether or not an Indian State elects

to adhere to the Constitution, it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its Treaty arrangements, so far as this may be required in the new situation ;

(*d*) the constitution-making body shall be composed as follows, unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities :

Immediately upon the result being known of the provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of the representatives of British India as a whole, and with the same powers as the British Indian members.

(*e*) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must, inevitably, bear the responsibility

for and retain control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort, but the task of organising to the full the military, moral, and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth, and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India."

Throughout the negotiations the provision of the non-accession of Provinces of British India formed the crux of the controversy, specially in view of the fact that Sir Stafford Cripps had in his broadcast speech on the 30th of March declared that in the great sub-continent of India there were more than one people—there were many peoples and races—as there were in the great sub-continent of Russia. "Our object is to give to the Indian peoples full self-government, with complete freedom as to how they will devise and organise their own constitution." To Congress it was quite enough, and soon after the Draft Declaration was published, the Hindu press started a powerful



Sir Stafford Cripps Mr. M. A. Jinnah

campaign of propaganda against it. The Congress objected from the very beginning to "several important and far-reaching proposals for the future." The Congress "had imagined that the new government would function with full powers as a Cabinet with the Viceroy acting as a constitutional head." But in public the Congress leaders took great pains to create an impression that the final break-down of negotiations came on account of the portfolio of Defence. On the authority of Sir Stafford himself it is clear that "none of these things were the real cause of the break-down of the negotiations. In their final letter addressed to me, the Congress Working Committee stated that the temporary form of government envisaged during the war was not such as to enable them to join the government. They have two suggestions to remedy the situation: First, an immediate change of the Constitution, a plan which everyone else has admitted to be wholly impracticable while the war is proceeding; and, second, that there should be full national government with a Cabinet of Indian leaders, untrammelled by any control by the Viceroy or the British Government. Realise what this means. Government for an indefinite period by a set of persons nominated by Indian parties responsible to no Legislature, nor any electorate, incapable of being changed; and a majority of whom would be in a position to dominate large minorities. It is easy to understand

that great minorities in India would never accept such a suggestion. Nor could His Majesty's Government, who have given pledges to those minorities, consent to their being placed unprotected while the existing Constitution lasts under a central and possibly inimical majority rule. It would be breach of all the pledges given. Such a solution may sound simple and effective to those who have no knowledge of the deep, communal divisions in India, but it is in fact wholly impracticable and would never be accepted by very large sections of the Indian peoples."

The resolution of the Congress Working Committee also laid emphasis on this point. The Committee recognised that future independence might be implicit in the proposals, but the accompanying provisions and restrictions were such that real freedom might well become an illusion. The Congress, in fact, went a step further and opined that "the British War Cabinet's new proposals relate principally to the future, upon the cessation of hostilities. The Committee, while recognising that self-determination for the people of India is accepted in principle in an uncertain future, regret that this is fettered and circumscribed and that certain provisions have been introduced which gravely imperil the development of a free and united national government and the establishment of a democratic State. Even the constitution-making

body is so constituted that the people's right of self-determination is vitiated by the introduction of non-representative elements." It is, therefore, clear that the Congress still regarded the League as a " non-representative element " and by putting forward the claim of Pakistan vitiated the right of self-determination of the people of India, of which the Congress regarded itself as the sole spokesman. This was a position which no understanding person could accept, much less Sir Stafford Cripps on whom rested the responsibility of safeguarding the pledges given to Musalmans by the British Government.

The position of the Musalmans and Mohammad Ali Jinnah as their spokesman has been none too enviable. Dealing with this Professor Coupland says: " The adoption of Pakistan as the League's objective has tended to stiffen the political deadlock. It was already difficult enough for Mr. Jinnah to co-operate with the Government's war effort, unless Congress did, for it would expose him to the charge—a wholly false charge, as his record shows—of being a poorer Indian patriot than Pandit Nehru and his colleagues. But there was now another difficulty. To join the existing Central Government, associated as it is with a Central legislature, both based on the principle of a united India, would prejudice the future of the Muslim cause. It would seem like a tacit acceptance of a con-

stitutional system which foreshadowed the imposition, not only on seven Provinces, but on India as a whole, of that Hindu majority rule which Pandit Nehru in an unguarded moment had once described as a 'Congress Raj,'* a system which flatly negatived Pakistan." This is of course the Professor's way of putting things. It may, however, be added that it is not quite correct to say that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had to wait for the Congress to come in for co-operation with the Government's war effort, for as far back as November 1939 when Lord Linlithgow made the first attempt to secure India's co-operation, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the League were willing to pool all resources of Muslim India for the successful prosecution of war and consequent events, of which the reader is well aware, prove beyond doubt that it was the British who refused the Muslim hand of co-operation. The British Government wanted to relegate the whole of Muslim India to a position of a mere minority which was against the facts and against their oft-repeated declarations, and this Mohammad Ali Jinnah could not possibly accept.

"The purpose of the non-accession provisions was manifest," says the Professor. "They embodied the British Government's considered reply to the Muslim claim of

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**The Unity of India* (London, 1931), p. 63.

Pakistan. It was unfair to say, as Hindu critics promptly said, that they directly encouraged the partition of India. On the contrary, they pointed the way by which alone (in the present writer's view) partition can be avoided. The story of the forbidden fruit applies to great affairs of life as much as small. The certain method of whetting a nation's or a community's appetite for something is to say that it is the one thing they may not have. Thus, just as there is small chance of India wanting to stay in the British Commonwealth unless she is free to go out, so the best hope of a single Indian Union is to assure the people of the predominantly Muslim areas that they need not join it unless they wish. As Sir Stafford had said in his broadcast, the door must be left open.* And, besides this point of principle, there was the practical question. How did the Hindus propose to compel the Muslims into the Union? Only, it would seem, by civil war.

" The reaction of Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League to this part of the scheme was naturally favourable. They can scarcely have expected, indeed, that the British Government would go so far to meet their claim, since for months past they had made no secret of

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*Professor Coupland in a footnote says: " In many of my conversations with Hindus, I urged this method of dealing with Pakistan; and several of them, including two leading Congressmen, agreed with me.

their anxiety lest the Congress demand for the ruling out of Pakistan from all discussion of the future should be satisfied. Owing to the 'weightage' given to the minorities in the electoral arrangements in the Punjab, the proportion of Muslims in the legislature does not exactly correspond with the proportion of their population. In the legislature it is 50·9 per cent, of the population 57·1 per cent. The position in Bengal is still less well-balanced: the corresponding figures there are 49·2 per cent and 54·7 per cent. Since it seemed improper that so momentous a decision should depend on so narrow a margin of votes, Sir Stafford proposed that, if the majority in favour of accession was less than 60 per cent of the legislature, the minority should be entitled to demand a plebiscite of the adult male population. This proposal was not, of course, acceptable to the non-Muslims. The scales, they said, were being weighed still more heavily in favour of partition. But it apparently contented Mr. Jinnah. It was understood that he and his Working Committee were now prepared to accept the Draft Declaration and bring the League into the National Government for the whole-hearted prosecution of the war, provided that the Congress Working Committee did the same.

" When in the event Congress rejected the Draft Declaration, Mr. Jinnah, as had always been expected, followed suit. But the

tone of his rejection was markedly less hostile than that of the Congress President. Nor did he reject it all along the line. His one serious complaint was that it did not explicitly pronounce in favour of Pakistan. He expressed satisfaction at the recognition of its possibility implied in the non-adherence scheme; but the establishment of a single Indian Union 'appears to be the main object of His Majesty's Government, the creation of more than one Union being relegated only to the realm of remote possibility.' Nor did the granting of the right of non-accession, such as it was, do full justice to the Muslims; it was unfair, in particular, to base it on the existing Provinces, whose frontiers had been drawn for administrative convenience only. The Draft Declaration, in fact, went some way to meet the Muslim case, but not far enough."

A fortnight after the Mission's departure, the Congress "stage-management" summond a session of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad for April 29. This endorsed the resolution of the Working Committee rejecting the Cripps proposals at Delhi. The Allahabad meeting is important from the point of view of Muslims. Shortly before the A.I.C.C., Rajagopalacharia, the ex-Premier of Madras, had summoned in Madras a meeting of Congressmen belonging to the Provincial Legislature and of other

local Congress leaders, and obtained their support for a programme which was totally opposed to that of the Working Committee. This meeting urged that "it is impossible for the people to think in terms of neutrality or passivity during an invasion by an enemy Power; neither is it practicable to organise any effective defence independently and uncoordinated with the defence measures of the Government." Therefore a national administration should be framed; and for that end the claims of the Muslim League for recognition of the right of separation of certain areas from united India upon the ascertainment of the wishes of the people of such areas should be acknowledged, if it were persisted in when the time comes for framing a constitution for India; and the Muslim League should be invited for a consultation for the installation of a national government to meet the present emergency.

Another resolution urged that, in view of the imminent danger to Madras, a popular government should be established there, and the Muslim League should be invited to participate in it. Rajagopalacharia had resigned from the Congress Working Committee in order to lead this movement. The more important of his aforetime colleagues violently denounced him in public; and the obedient A.I.C.C. on May 2 rejected the proposal for negotiations with the Muslim League and the

very idea of self-determination for any part of India. Thus the same leaders, who a few weeks before were negotiating with the emissary of the British War Cabinet for control of the armed defence of the country, now wrapped themselves in the formula of "non-violent non-co-operation"; and all professions of consideration for minorities were belied by a flat refusal to discuss the main claim of the Muslim League. There was nothing new in this. This record shows that the aim of the Congress has been to use the war for wresting power for itself.* In place of Rajagopalacharia's resolution the Congress passed another one moved by Jagat Narain Lal, which for all intents and purposes completely negatived the Muslim claim for self-determination.

The purpose of the Cripps Mission may have been anything. But its result went to some halting extent in favour of Muslim India. The fact that Mohammad Ali Jinnah alone represented the Muslim case authoritatively as President of the All-India Muslim League demonstrated and added to the great popularity of the League and the support it had of the Musalmans of India. The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, was invariably accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru and even then greater weight was

**Times of India*: Congress and the Axis.

given to the opinion of Gandhi than that of the Congress President. All these factors clearly exposed the fiction that the Congress was not a Hindu body, and led to the final conclusion that " broadly speaking, Hindu public opinion is Congress opinion, and Muslim public opinion is League opinion." Dealing with this aspect of the Cripps Mission, Professor Coupland writes that the personal impression made by Sir Stafford on the Indian public might be blurred for a moment, but it would not be forgotten. His high office, his own previous record, his frank answers to pressmen, his interviews with politicians, which were wholly friendly to the very end, above all, the fact that his word was trusted, all that had left such a mark on the Indian mind—and on the British too—that the tone and temper of future dealings between Britain and India would be different now from what they had been. " Secondly, Sir Stafford, by constant and candid discussion of it in the open forum, made the Indian public face the communal problem—and that, not her relations with Britain, is India's major problem—more squarely than they had ever done before. Some Congressmen may still reiterate their old charges against Britain on this head, but Mr. Gandhi himself has now admitted that independence is impossible until Indians themselves have ' solved the communal tangle.'

Still more significant is Mr. Rajagopal-

acharia's renewal of his efforts to bring about a Hindu-Muslim understanding. He has proposed that Congress should accept in principle the Muslim claim to Pakistan. And this time the opposition of his colleagues and the A.I.C.C. has not silenced him. He has resigned from the Working Committee and declared his intention of trying to win over public opinion and Congress itself to his policy. Clearly a new realism on this vital issue has been inspired by those discussions at Delhi. Thus, on each of its two sides, as regards both Anglo-Indian and Hindu-Muslim relations, the Mission has opened a new phase of the Indian question. Congress leaders may still talk in the old terms; but Congress is not all India, and even in its own ranks the voice of the younger generation can be heard asking, as it does in other countries, for new ideals and policies to meet the needs of a new age. And when the tide of war has turned and the Japanese menace, which accounts for so much of the present malaise in India, has disappeared, the solution of one-half of her two-fold problem will have been made easier and that of the other half at any rate less difficult by the British Government's policy and the manner in which it was explained by Sir Stafford Cripps at Delhi."

CHAPTER XXVIII

" OPEN REBELLION "

The statesmanlike policy that Jinnah had laid down for Muslim India in regard to the war by allowing the Muslim provinces to continue their normal activities conduced to the consolidation of his position both in India and abroad. To the Musalmans it meant a greater security of their interests. To the British it demonstrated that Jinnah's politics were realistic and that he was no mere visionary. The continued practical suggestions that he advanced during this period for the better understanding and better co-operation which would result in the greatest benefit to India and in the most successful prosecution of the war made a considerable impression on the British public. In this he was helped by various factors. As a matter of fact, the Congress policy of repeated blunders beginning by their resignations from the ministries and of pursuing the vague course of hollow idealism coupled with impossible demands, very often militating against the interests of important sections of the vast population of India, specially against those of Musalmans; the Congress game of using the war as an instrument to wrest power for itself, of ignoring the

prevalent conditions and of refusing to recognise the existence of weighty problems that faced the Indian politics, contributed a great deal to Jinnah's phenomenal success.

The extraordinary strength and prestige that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had achieved during the last few years, by organising the scattered forces of Muslim India and earning their gratitude and following on the one hand and on the other by bringing home to the British Government the justice of the Muslim demand of Pakistan by slow but steady degrees, had served to drive the Congress to a point of desperation. The Cripps offer was indeed an indication that the British policy was inclined to take a turn for the better. For Jinnah, therefore, things were becoming more and more satisfactory.

For the Congress, however, it was now necessary to get out of the rut in which it found itself and something had got to be done to keep its present leadership intact. In this connection the growing threat to India of Japanese aggression had to be taken into account. There were only two courses open—either to retrace the steps and go back to the Legislatures and work the constitution, or to start a programme with a dual policy and keep everything in suspense. As far as the former course was concerned it was obviously fraught with difficulties. In

the first place after the failure of the Cripps Mission it would not be easy to convince Hindu India that such a move would not amount to a complete surrender on the part of the Congress. Secondly, the British Government would now dictate its own terms for such an arrangement. Thirdly, it would necessarily introduce the Muslim League as an important factor to be reckoned with. Fourthly, due to the uncertainty of the war situation, it would be futile for the Congress either to take a " pro-imperialist " attitude or to adopt an anti-Axis policy. It was, therefore, natural that the Congress should have decided upon something which would in the first instance give the Hindus something in which they would find themselves engaged and forget the blunders committed by their leaders. It would also perhaps divert the attention of the Musalmans of India from the possibility, however remote it was, of the establishment of Pakistan, round which it had come to be centred by the Cripps Proposals.

Against this background the next move of the Congress was conceived and carried out. In May, Gandhi declared that he considered ' the vivisection of India to be a sin.' What was more, he was firmly of the opinion ' that there was no unity whilst the third party was there to prevent it.' The British Government, he said, had ' created the

artificial division and it kept it up.' In its presence, he declared, both Hindus and Muslims and for that matter 'all seemingly conflicting or disgruntled interests and elements would look to it for support and would get it.' He said, their interest was greater than the independence of the country. The implied meaning of Gandhi's writings was that whoever did not coalesce with the Congress programme was essentially selfish, and consequently against India's independence. As far as the Musalmans were concerned Gandhi committed another big mistake in so far as he underrated the strength of Jinnah and his organisation. He apparently thought that Muslim leadership had no hold over Muslim public opinion and that any action seemingly for the purpose of attaining independence would split them apart.

Gandhi went on developing this theme in spite of protests and objections raised by the Musalmans of India and in August, in a speech before the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay, he openly remarked that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had been a Congressman but now he seemed to be misguided. "Mr. Jinnah," said he, "does not seem to believe in the Congress programme and in the Congress demand. But I cannot wait any longer for India's freedom. I cannot wait till Mr. Jinnah is converted, for the immediate consummation of Indian

freedom." The implication was that Jinnah did not stand for the independence of India —a thing which Gandhi himself knows to be the greatest libel on the Muslim leader.

What was the move that Gandhi launched? It was "the formula of inviting the British power to withdraw." There was obviously nothing wrong in doing that. But in view of his false charges against the Muslims it had come to be regarded by them with acute suspicion. The confirmation of Muslim apprehension came from Gandhi himself when a few days later he qualified this amazing invitation. He wrote: "If, however, the withdrawal is orderly and voluntary, the British not only gain a moral height but secure the ungrudging friendship of a great nation." It is, therefore, clear— and subsequent correspondence between Gandhi and the Viceroy left no doubt—that this so-called invitation was meant to induce the British to withdraw 'in an orderly manner' and hand over power to the Hindus, whose ungrudging friendship he had promised. Gandhi said, he was fighting for liberty in order to evolve a National Government suited to the genius of India. But explaining the character of this 'National Government' he declared, "whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term."

This would virtually mean the Hindu Raj. What was behind this demand of a National Government? When viewed in the proper perspective it reveals itself like this: In the event of Axis entry into India this National Government would be in a position to decide the fate of India. In the event of the defeat of the Axis and British remaining in India it would be in a position to decide the fate of the Musalmans.

It must, however, be said to the credit of Gandhi that this 'Quit India' move created a great deal of sensation in the country. There was a feeling among the Hindus that it meant a complete annihilation of the leadership of Jinnah and that after the movement was in full swing the Musalmans would fall out of his influence. The British Government were concerned with the impending threat to the administration of law and order and were making arrangements to tighten the police control in order to prevent a civil war. The Musalmans felt that it might result in serious Hindu-Muslim clashes and bring about a complete estrangement between Hindus and Muslims. Mohammad Ali Jinnah himself was apprehensive of such a consequence and had issued an appeal to Musalmans to view the Congress move with equanimity and calmness and wait for the decision of the League Committee which was due to meet in the middle of August. But he was sure that

on the whole the decision of the Congress Committee (which was due to meet in August) would not affect his nation and that the rank and file of the Muslim India would obey his mandate and follow the lead given to them by the League. The decision of the League, however, depended upon the shape of things that would crystallise in the wake of the Congress movement; and Jinnah, with his usual cool and thoughtful mind, was watching the situation.

On the morning of the 9th of August 1942, the author was the first to break the news to Mohammad Ali Jinnah that the Congress leaders were rounded up in Bombay and that most of them were already despatched to the destinations of their respective prisons. He received the news with surprise and took away from the author's hand the special edition of a local newspaper which carried it and after enquiring a few details engaged himself in perusing the columns of the paper. Soon after this the disturbances began and news poured into Jinnah's office of various outrages that were committed by Hindus in Bombay. Telephonic enquiries followed from the Musalmans from all over the city when their business premises were surrounded by angry Hindu mobs, asking him what they should do. Jinnah had already made arrangements regarding such contingencies through

the local Muslim League, who handled the situation with great tact and courage.

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League met on the 16th of August, although a few of its members were not able to come in time owing to acts of sabotage committed in the way. The Committee considered the situation from every angle and passed a lengthy resolution deploring the Congress decision of August 8, and gave a detailed account of the Congress policy during the last few years. The Committee also criticised the attitude of the British Government for appeasing the Congress "with barren and sterile results," which had "now culminated in the open defiance of law and order." The League Committee reiterated its faith in Pakistan, as the only peaceful solution of India's constitutional problem and made it clear that it stood not only for the freedom of Muslim India but also that of Hindu India. The Working Committee declared once over again that the League was ready and willing to consider any proposals and negotiate with any party for the setting up of a provisional Government on the basis of equality. In these circumstances the Committee called upon the Musalmans to abstain from any participation in the movement initiated by the Congress and to continue to pursue their normal peaceful life, and hoped that "no attempt shall be made from

any quarter to intimidate, coerce, molest or interfere in any manner with the normal life of the Muslims."*

Jinnah's extraordinary political sagacity and wisdom once again proved to be in the best interest of Muslim India soon after the arrest of the Congress leaders. The 'Quit India' movement subsided and beyond a few acts of madness on the part of certain Hindu individuals and misguided youths the situation eased within a few days. If Muslims had joined the Congress movement, beguiled by the slogan of freedom or independence, Gandhi would have represented to England, America and the world that he alone represented the whole of India and that his demand was also supported by Muslim India. A greater folly and a more serious blunder the Muslims could never have committed if they had fallen into this trap. As a matter of fact, as Jinnah himself said, Gandhi's movement was the gambler's last throw.

The part that the British Government played in arresting the movement in time and nipping the evil in the bud was in a way beneficial to the interest of the Musalmans. The natural course, therefore, should have been that if Muslim India had any belief in the *bona fides* and honesty of the British, the

*See Appendix VI.

Musalmans would have joined hands with them to crush the Hindu Congress and its movement which was directed against the Musalmans also. But, as Jinnah pointed out, the Muslim India could not trust the British either. They were playing their own game. The Muslim leader, therefore, gave the only lead that was open to him and asked his followers to remain aloof from the movement. "Let them fight it out," declared he. "This is one of those cases where neutrality is the most effective policy on our part." And such was the effect of this lead and so clearly the Musalmans understood it that the Congress movement went without even the slightest support of the Muslims. The Government of India themselves had to admit this fact and exempted the Muslims from the punitive tax that was later levied in certain areas on the saboteurs.

After the arrest of the Congress caucus, those Hindus who still enjoyed the fresh air outside the prison walls began to feel active as usual and initiated the customary move of the demand of the release of the political prisoners. Appeals were issued both to the Government of India and the Government of Britain for help. America, China and Russia were taken into confidence and political manoeuvres once again came in vogue. But the main plank of the Hindu policy—of ignoring the Muslims of India—was not abandoned even by

these individuals who called themselves most liberal and considered themselves outside the much detested pale of communalism. New parties sprang up and unattached leaders were let loose to negotiate a peace between the Congress and British Government. It was once again a trying time for the Musalmans It was feared that the Congress after having seen the aftermaths of its policy might retrace its steps on the plea that it had never started the movement, and the British Government might submit to the Congress demands under the stress of the impending dangers to India from the Eastern theatre of war. It was, indeed, the right time for Mohammad Ali Jinnah to assert himself and in November he made this bold and courageous statement: "People ask, supposing the British and the Congress make up their differences and the former yield and surrender to the Congress demand, what will happen to us? The answer is: If the British Government after all their solemn pledges attempt to sacrifice us, let us down and throw us at the mercy of the Congress Raj, believe me, they will not succeed if we are united and organised. Now we are able to stand up and make such a Government impossible. Even the combined forces of China and America cannot impose on us a constitution which will sacrifice Muslim India. But if such a mad blunder is committed by the United Nations, remember even a worm turns, and notwithstanding the foreign bayonets

upholding the Congress Raj, we shall make the administration of the country impossible, for it is far too grave an issue for us to submit to."

This went on. The Congress being behind the bars, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now left free to pursue his programme of action. About a year before this, when the war situation in India had worsened, he had appointed a League Committee to make an extensive tour of the sub-continent with a view to contacting Musalmans residing in the affected areas as well as others in order to explain to them the League programme of Civil Defence and explore the possibilities of how help could best be rendered to them. Incidentally the League Committee side by side with its work in hand gathered a store of useful information about the various places that it visited. Secondly, in March 1942, Jinnah had issued an appeal for funds and in spite of the difficult system of collection adopted by him had received, within a year, a considerable amount. The main question that engaged his attention now was the improvement of the internal organisation of the League and with this view he concentrated his efforts in the Pakistan areas. In November, he proceeded to the Punjab and made contacts with the Sikh and other non-Muslim leaders of that province and explained to them the implications and beneficial consequences of the Muslim demand of

Pakistan. He made an attempt to reform the Muslim politics of Punjab and to bring the Punjab Muslim League on to a high standard of efficiency. All this, however, was not easy and he had to redouble his endeavours in this direction.

Jinnah's attention was, however, not altogether undivided. The British Government was making an attempt to placate the non-Congress Hindus in order to carry on the functions of the Government of India with their help. The Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India were making statements about the indivisibility of India in order to achieve that end. Some of their speeches went so far as actually to prejudge India's future constitutional position and to militate against the Muslim demand. But, in general, things were satisfactory and Jinnah had plenty of time to proceed with his programme of work. During this period he had good occasions to correct the wrong impression which American and British public had come to acquire through the continued and studied propaganda conducted by Hindus and their agents. A number of foreign correspondents kept in regular touch with him and the entire burden of these corrective measures fell on the shoulders of Jinnah himself. The result was that the smoke screen which the Congress and Hindus had raised in order to prevent others from seeing the justice of Muslim claim of Pakistan,



LOUIS FISCHER (American Correspondent) Interviewing M. A. Jinnah

vanished in no time and most of the important elements of foreign public opinion became alive to the real Indian political situation.

During this time Mohammad Ali Jinnah made many a weighty and important pronouncement and practically in all cases disproved the false allegations made against him by his vindictive opponents and also to dispel doubts existing in the minds of others about the Muslim goal of Pakistan. His speech at the plenary session of the All-India Muslim League at Delhi in April, 1943, was perhaps the most important and most weighty. In his presidential address he gave at the outset an account of the position and strength that the Muslim organisation had come to acquire during the past years with special reference to the Muslim majority provinces. His warning to those who thought of using the League for their own interests and selfish motives meant that he had taken to heart the internal organisation of the League. He hoped that the recent happenings in Bengal and other provinces would be sufficient lessons for them. He traced at length the history of the political movement and constitutional advance of India since the year 1861 and the growth of Hindu nationalism that was brought about by the introduction of democratic institutions in India. He outlined how Hindu mind reacted to the decision of the British Government that the people of India would be associated with the

day-to-day administration of the country, and how Muslims, after a few years of working of the reforms, in 1906 demanded the right to separate entity in the form of separate electorates. He briefly traced the course of the events during all these previous years, with which the reader would now be familiar. He explained to his audience as to what the movement started by Gandhi actually was and how it adversely affected the Musalmans. How the narrow-minded attitude of Hindus towards their Muslim countrymen destroyed all possible chances of adjustment between the two great sections of this vast sub-continent of India. Democracy, therefore, could only mean a Hindu Raj in India and could not be suited to the genius of India and Jinnah asked Hindu leardership to " give up this pose."

He made an appeal to Hindu leaders and if they were adamant to Hindu public at large to " stop this internecine war ; declare a truce ; let us sit as equals and come to a settlement." It was no use saying that the British did not want a settlement and that as long as they remained in India there could be no settlement.* He emphasised the point that the movement started by the Congress was taken by Muslim India to be one against their vital interests and said that the Hindu leadership must call it off. He deplored the tactics adopt-

*Referring to Gandhi's writings.

ed by Hindus for diverting the attention of the world from the real issues by means of false and often contradictory statements. As an illustration he quoted an article of Jawaharlal Nehru sent to America in which he wrote that the introduction of the principle of partitioning India was one of the reasons which led to bitter resentment against the Cripps Proposals and that the Congress could never agree to this. "Was it on the question of veto," asked Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "or was it on the ground of the Defence portfolio, or was it that the All-India Congress would not agree to any idea of Pakistan? To this country is given one version and to America another."*

Resuming his narrative he traced the causes that underlined the movement of Civil Disobedience by individuals and then that of 'Quit India'. He characterised all these manoeuvres on the part of the Hindus as futile and said that they were conducted against the Muslim demand of Pakistan and to blackmail

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*This statement of Nehru will be of special interest to those who are led away by the argument of certain parties engaged perpetually in an attempt to make the Musalmans believe that the Congress in its August resolution had conceded the principle of self-determination. The Muslim point of view that as long as the resolution of Jagat Narain Lal, moved by him at Allahabad in 1942, stands, no importance could be attached to any professions of the Congress leaders regarding their acceptance of the principle of Pakistan. For the Musalmans the Lahore Resolution of the League lays down a very simple proposition, a bare minimum, in which there is no room for a *via media* or formulas.

the British. "I say to the Hindus—and the Britishers know it better than anybody else—that the quickest way for the freedom of the peoples, both Hindus and Muslims, is Pakistan. It may come in my life-time or not, you will remember these words of mine. I say this with no ill-will or offence. Some nations have killed millions of each other. That is not permanent. An enemy of today is a friend of tomorrow. That is life. That is history. So I say this, with a clear conscience. My profound regret is that it is the Congress and its Hindu leadership that are holding up the achievement of freedom of both the Hindus and Musalmans. Our conscience is clear. I appeal to the Hindu public and Hindu leaders: Review, revise your policy." Even the latest offer of Gandhi of inviting Jinnah to form a National Government "subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary for the duration of the war, such government being responsible to a duly elected assembly," was nothing more than clouding the issues with vague and ambiguous slogans. It was no use, therefore, for Gandhi and his coterie of men to continue their present policy. The primary duty of the Congress leadership was to declare a truce and retrace their steps. "Nobody would welcome it more than myself," said the Muslim leader, "if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. Let me tell you that

it will be the greatest day both for the Hindus and Musalmans. If he has made up his mind, what is there to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me? He is writing letters to the Viceroy. Why does he not write to me direct? Who is there that can prevent him from doing so? What is the use of going to the Viceroy and leading deputation and carrying on correspondence? Who is to prevent Mr. Gandhi to-day? I cannot believe for a single moment—strongas this Government may be in this country; you may say anything you like against this Government—I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me. It will be a very serious thing, indeed, if such a thing is done by the Government. But I do not see evidence of any kind of change of policy on the part of Mr. Gandhi or Congress or the Hindu leadership." Explaining further his point, Jinnah said: "Mr. Gandhi gets all the information, all the newspapers and knows and understands what is going on. If there is any change of heart on his part he was only to drop me a few lines, when, I assure you, the Muslim League will not fail, whatever may have been our controversies in the past."

So much for the Congress. Jinnah bitterly criticised also the policy of the British Government towards the League and its act of refusing to grasp the hand of co-operation extended by the Muslims for

the purpose of the successful prosecution of the war. He explained to his audience the constitutional position of Pakistan and the place of minorities in it and cited examples from the world history that supported the Muslim contention. He also examined the various counter-suggestions that were put forward by various organisations and individuals and analysed their various implications making it clear how they failed to meet the Muslim demand. He then referred to the Phoenix-like rise and regeneration of Muslim India from the very ashes of its ruination after the terrible destruction in India in the 18th and 19th centuries. This rise, he said, amounted to a miracle. The people who had lost everything and who were placed by Providence between the upper and nether stones of a mill not only came to their own in a very short time but became, after the British, socially the most solid, militarily the most virile and politically the most decisive factor in modern India. Now it was to take up the constructive programme to build up this nation, so that it could march on the path leading to the goal of Pakistan. It was for the Musalmans to put their heads together and undertake proper and systematic planning.

The conciliatory note that Mohammad Ali Jinnah struck during his speech had unfortunately an adverse effect on Gandhi.

He made it an instrument as a Hindu paper suggested to put Jinnah and the British Government in the wrong. Gandhi wrote to Jinnah saying that he wanted to meet the Muslim leader without signifying his attitude towards "the internecine war" and Muslim goal of Pakistan to which reference was made by Jinnah in his speech. The Government of India, therefore, in accordance with their declared policy of not allowing the prisoners to carry on correspondence with the outside world, withheld the letter but forwarded its substance to Jinnah. When the news of this letter was published there was an uproar from the "nationalist" press. The game was that either the Muslim League and its leader should be embroiled into an unnecessary clash with the Government of India or that the Musalmans should be made to think that their leaders were in an unholy alliance with the British. Both these attempts utterly failed. Mohammad Ali Jinnah cleared the position laid down for such a letter and said that he still hoped that such a communication would not be checked by the Government of India. "Some of the responsible Hindu leaders," said he, "pressed upon me that Mr. Gandhi has now realised that he had made a mistake and that he would be prepared to consider and retrace his steps if he was given an opportunity to do so, and that he had changed his attitude towards Pakistan and would be willing to come to a

settlement on the basis of Pakistan, but the British Government were preventing the Hindu-Muslim settlement by refusing people of position and standing to establish contact with him for this purpose. I, therefore, suggested that if Mr. Gandhi were to write to me a letter indicating that he was prepared to retrace his steps and abandon his policy and programme culminating in the resolution of the A.I.C.C. of August 8, and was even now willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan, we were willing to bury the past and forget it. I still believe that the Government will not dare to stop such a letter if it came from Mr. Gandhi."

Interested parties, however, continued to shout that this was Jinnah's afterthought and he wanted to evade the issue. But the original text of Gandhi's letter subsequently published cleared every doubt, as he himself recognised that there was an " if " in Jinnah's speech and that what was required was a change of heart and not change of tactics. But during the intervening period between the news of Gandhi's letter and the publication of its actual text the regular campaign of vilification and vituperation had considerably strengthened the hands of the Congress agents. Some of the Madras Congressmen had, it seems, won over the Khaksar leader, Allama Mashriqi, who happened to be in

Madras at the time, and got him to issue instructions to his followers to adopt every means to "influence" Mohammad Ali Jinnah and make him realise the so-called importance of "oneness." The result was that a fanatic from the Punjab, fired with the enthusiasm of becoming the most faithful follower of the Allama, went to the residence of the Muslim leader and found an occasion to attack him with a knife. The incident is well known and need not be retold here.* But it, nevertheless, demonstrated how misguided and thoughtless propaganda can and does produce undesirable effects. Such incidents abound in the history of the unfortunate political life of this sub-continent. And yet one finds that in India history is seldom made. It often repeats itself.

Unmindful of the trend of events Jinnah's attention was riveted on the Muslim Provinces. His primary aim now was to see that in Muslim areas the authority of the League is maintained and that in the provincial legislatures League parties function properly and systematically. He now resolved that the provincial Governments which had been hitherto functioning under the name of the All-India Muslim League should in

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*A full account of this incident will be found in *Jinnah Faces an Assassin*, by a Bar-at-law.

fact act under the control of the League and be a source of strength to the Muslim organisation instead of serving as mere agents for the good conduct of governmental business, as some of them were tending to be. He wanted to inculcate in them the idea that they should carry on their affairs under a Muslim national policy and bring their respective governments on to a higher standard of public service in pursuance of the nobler cause of public good and public well-being. With this view he started his work in the provinces but while he succeeded considerably in Sind, North-West Frontier Province and Bengal he could not accomplish much in the Punjab, where his efforts have yet to show the desired result and need his concentrated attention. It is, however, beyond doubt that the general effect on the public mind of the Punjab has been more satisfactory than could be imagined.

The sterile policy of the British Government to conduct the affairs of the Government of India with the help of men with ittle or no public support and the consequent apathy and lack of foresight shown by them in dealing with the acute food problem that was developing for some time past on the one hand and on the other the refusal of the Congress to devote any attention to the real interest of the people but instead to party gains, based partly on the stupid miscalculation

of the relative strength of the Allies and the Axis, brought about one of the most severe calamities the people of Bengal and adjacent tracts had experienced for a long time. An acute famine in the fertile agricultural land of Bengal connected with a net-work of railways on all sides would seem an unthinkable monstrosity. But that is what exactly happened. On top of this there was the ruthless Banya capitalist, always posing as a "nationalist," who hoarded and held back foodstuffs and cared little for the hundreds of thousands of lives that were being lost in the bargain. Fortunately, at this moment a Muslim League Ministry came in power in Bengal and Lord Wavell assumed the Viceroyalty of India. The popular support that the League Ministry got from the people of Bengal and Jinnah's valuable endeavours in bringing the various organisations together for the purpose of relief and above all the unprecendented co-operation between the civil and military authorities which was possible through the good offices of Lord Wavell served a great deal to control the situation and Bengal was saved from the impending mass annihilation. The Bengal famine and its relative causes must serve as an eye-opener to the future constitutionalist and to the student of the political problem of India. The manner in which this public calamity of the first magnitude was used by some of India's foremost politicians to ad-

vance their own ends and to further party politics clearly demonstrates the type of texture of which India's "national" life is woven and how far reliance can be placed on a democratic co-operation and good-will of the heterogeneous political elements even when the existence of millions of lives is at stake.



QAED-E-AZAM being taken in procession at the occasion of the All-India Muslim League annual Session, in Karachi.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE UNCHANGED HEART

The plenary session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Karachi in the month of December of the year 1943. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now determined in the first place to organise the internal machinery of the League both in the Centre and in the provinces and in the second place to plan the future of Muslim activity within the political field and outside. The appointment of a Committee of Action and also the setting up of a body for the purpose of future planning were steps taken for the realisation of these objects. Muslim India was now entering a new phase. In fact it was now coming into its own. The weight of the Muslim public opinion was slowly making itself felt through the medium of Jinnah's influence. Reforms were needed everywhere and the Muslim intelligentsia was getting impatient for their early introduction, especially in view of the fact that their trusted leader had already taken big strides in that direction.

The Presidential Address delivered by Mohammad Ali Jinnah at Karachi is profusely punctuated by notes of deep pathos showing how much moved he was by the wrong

meaning that were generally attributed to his utterances, and false motives associated with his political actions. For this he had no less complaint against the British than against the Hindus. But he said he must face these allegations with boldness and courage for his conscience was absolutely clear. He, however, made it clear once over again that he bore no ill-will towards any organisation, group or individual. He was advocating a cause in which he thoroughly believed and he was voicing a sentiment which he knew was just and reasonable. His arguments and appeals were, therefore, not only directed to Hindus alone but also to the British, but he was firmly of the opinion that if the former agreed to the principle underlying the Muslim claim, the British authority would be easy to handle in view of the joint effort that would follow. He made no secret of the fact that he hoped such a state of affairs was sooner or later bound to come.

The hopes of Mohammad Ali Jinnah were not altogether unfounded. During the next budget session of the Central Legislative Assembly the Congress Party joined hands with the League in defeating the official *bloc*. The news was welcomed by all. Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman rightly said that "a healthy change in the outlook of Congressmen is taking place and the realities of the situation have begun to be appreciated." The Assembly

incident was hailed by Hindus and Muslims alike as an augury of better understanding and consequently better results, and it was hoped that it might lead to a permanent settlement of a long-standing problem. All eyes were now turned towards the League which had always been eager to coalesce with any party on the basis of equality without prejudice to the major political problem.

It was now for the Government of India to act. Immediately, therefore, in the following month came the unconditional release of Gandhi, and the attention of the Hindu public was once again focussed on Poona where Gandhi stayed. Once again the leaders, who led no one, began to feel active. Once again appeals and messages were addressed to the Whitehall direct. Once again the policy of ignoring Muslim interests and even the existence of the League came into play. Once again requests were made to the India Office that the British Government should "follow Mr. Gandhi's release with a friendly gesture." All this suited the British very well, but the Hindu intelligentsia continued to play into the hands of the detested "imperialists" as usual, and when Mr. Amery refused to have any truck with Gandhi it was again driven to a point of desperation.

The tactics of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi were, however, quite different. After

he had noticed the reaction of Amery to the appeals of the Hindu agents he decided to embark on a " fact finding mission," on the plea that he had been out of touch with politics for a long time and he was not in a position to decide anything definite. But the events that followed, facts about which were brought to light later, throw light upon the actual motive of this mission. It seems that this so-called fact-finding mission was undertaken actually to seek an opportunity by means of which Gandhi would be in a position to negotiate a settlement with the British Government over the head of the Muslim League. He saw, probably, a ray of hope in the ill-advised statements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India and other British statesmen, who had been unduly emphasising their belief in the " essential unity " of India. The first thing that Gandhi did, therefore, perhaps in consonance with his fact-finding mission, was to write to the Viceroy for an interview. The Viceroy, however, could not see his way to grant the interview because of the " radical difference in our points of view. " But he was willing to consider " any definite and constructive policy " that Gandhi put forth " on further reflection."

What was now to be done ? Gandhi hit upon a novel idea. A number of jurists were set up to give their legal opinion on the

Congress resolution of August 1942. Soon the expected verdict came that the resolution in question had lapsed ; and this decision was given a wide publicity in India and abroad. Gandhi closely watched the situtation and when he found that this could not also serve his purpose he retraced his steps saying that the August resolution was innocuous and stood as it was, but his authority under the resolution had lapsed.

At this time an English paper sent out to India one of its representatives, Gelder by name, with a view to seeing Gandhi and to providing facilities to the latter for political negotiations. The reader is familiar with a similar incident during the non-co-operation days when the same paper had sent out another representative for the same purpose. But this time, Gelder's mission was more or less unnecessary. This time Gandhi was outside the prison and his release was not without a purpose. On the contrary the exclusive interview that Gandhi granted to Gelder without inviting the Indian journalists, who perpetually kept hovering round Gandhi's quarters, roused a bitter resentment among them. His action, they thought, was very much against his own preachings of *Swadeshi*. In fact a well-known Parsi journalist of Bombay could not find out why Congress leaders should behave in this manner and why there should be " such a big misfire from the biggest gun of them all."

Gelder's interview that was published in India was followed by a studied campaign of propaganda conducted by a score of Hindu learders led by Rajagopalacharia that Gandhi had changed his attitude towards what they called the communal problem. At times it was even stated that the liberal-minded leaders such as Rajagopalacharia and others had triumphed over Gandhi. A formula for the Hindu-Muslim settlement designed by the Madras leader and having the " blessings " of Gandhi was put forth before the public together with the text of the correspondence that passed between the former and Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The Muslim leader in the course of this correspondence had stated that he would put the formula before the League Committee to which the Hindu leader had objected on the ground that it was first to be accepted by Jinnah and then by the League. Rajagopalacharia's statement that accompanied the release of this correspondence to the press was to the effect that Jinnah had no desire for a settlement.

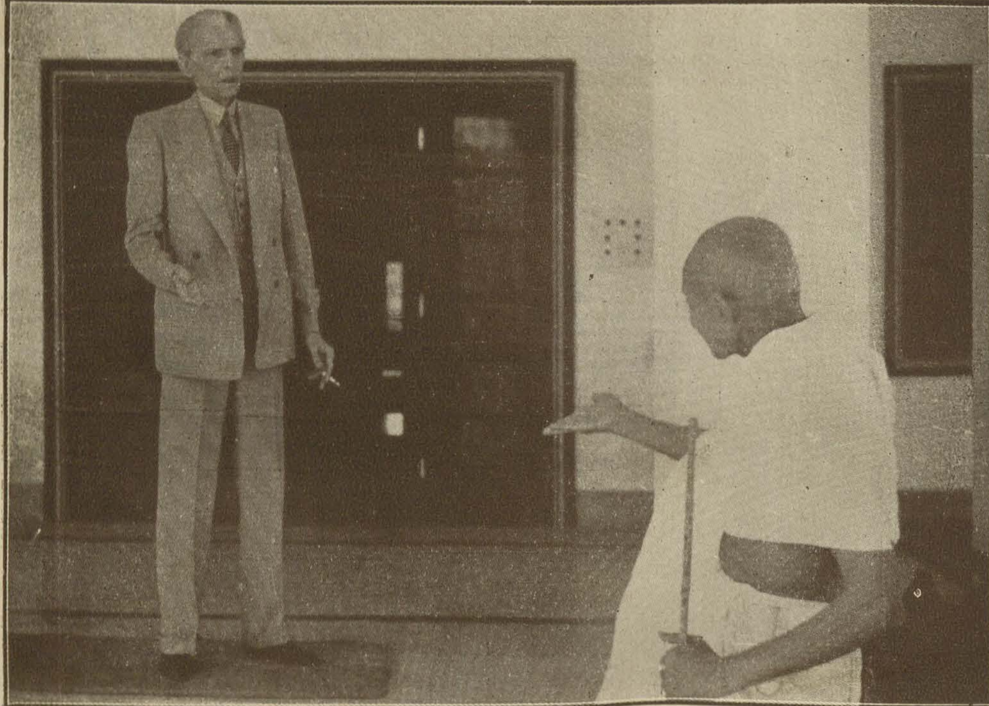
A resume of the circumstances that prompted Rajagopalacharia to publish this correspondence was given by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the course of his statement before the Council of the All-India Muslim League which met at Delhi at the end of July 1944. Tracing the course of the events as to how attempts of Gandhi to get into touch with the

British authorities failed and coming down to the failure of Gelder " as a go-between to link him up with Lord Wavell," Jinnah proceeded: " At this psychological moment Mr. Rajagopalacharia was at Poona and suddenly I received a telegram from him on June 30, as another go-between, complaining without any reason that his letter of April 8 remained unanswered—although he knew perfectly well that it required no answer, as the answer was already given to him—and threatening me that he would like to publish the formula and my rejection. He said he had sent the telegram with Mr. Gandhi's approval and further warned me that he would like me at this juncture to reconsider my rejection. In my reply I pointed out to him that his version that I had rejected the formula was wrong and I am glad that he does not contradict the true facts as stated by me but confirms them. The correspondence was, however, abruptly released to the press, so that I should stand on my trial before the bar of public opinion of the world and of India and especially of the Musalmans. Immediately the word had passed, and the Congress press framed various grave charges against me.

" My only sin was," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, " that I requested Mr. Rajagopalacharia to allow me to place his proposal before my Working Committee and that as Mr. Gandhi was no longer in prison I requested

that he should directly communicate to me whatever proposals he may choose to put forward, assuring him that I would place them before my Working Committee. What was the objection to such a course? I fail to appreciate the line adopted by Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Rajagopalacharia and I am willing to face the verdict of the Muslim League or any other independent and impartial men in India or abroad."

Jinnah then proceeded to discuss the details of the Formula and explained at length how in effect it did not meet the Muslim demand. At the close of his statement he disclosed to the House that he had received a letter from Gandhi written in Gujrati together with a translation in Urdu wishing to see him. Jinnah said he had written back to Gandhi in English—"the only language in which I can make no mistake"—signifying his pleasure to receive him at Bombay. The news caused a sensation in the political circles of India and for the time being everything remained in suspense. But the publication of Gandhi-Wavell correspondence, the last link of Gandhi's fact-finding mission, was to a certain extent damping. It demonstrated that even though Gandhi was meeting the Muslim leader for a political settlement his hope in bringing the British round to his point of view has not been shaken. He was obviously persisting in his futile attempt to blackmail the British



Mr. JINNAH Mr. GANDHI

against the Muslim interests in spite of protests and objections from the side of Muslim India. The outcome of this meeting, therefore, could be anything but settlement.

The leaders met in the middle of September 1944 and continued their discussion for about a fortnight through personal talk and letters. Both Rajagopalacharia's formula and Lahore Resolution of the League were discussed. Side by side a counter-proposal was also made by Gandhi and ultimately they parted without arriving at any final decision. A study of the letters that passed between Jinnah and Gandhi during these talks reveals that the meeting was more a battle of wits and words than anything else. The Hindu leader insisted that he came in his personal capacity and did not represent any particular point of view than his own. Jinnah on the other hand kept on repeating that he had not accepted that position as a basis for negotiations but was willing to convert Gandhi to his point of view if he were open for conviction. But Jinnah pointed out to Gandhi that even though the latter denied his being "clothed with representative authority" it was strangely clear that "your representative capacity comes into play when you are making counter-proposals," as he had kept on saying that Sikhs and other elements would not agree to the Muslim demands. The stiff attitude of Gandhi and his circuitous argumentation, shifting from

Rajagopalacharia's formula to Lahore Resolution of the League and then back again and then over again to the League Resolution, punctuating the discussions by his own suggestions and those of others whom he did not claim to represent, had made the breakdown of these talks inevitable. Jinnah had called this break unfortunate, and in his final letter anticipated a storm of vituperation, as he himself put it, "to pillory me when the word goes."

The word passed and soon after scores of statements were published in the press, but in the midst of this camouflage the clear outlines of an important fact were discernible—that while Gandhi posed as an individual without having any representative authority vested in him, he had, prior to opening his negotiations with Jinnah, already committed himself to several organisations, not excluding those of the Punjab and Bengal, to the effect that he would never agree to anything without consulting them.

The Hindu public reaction to the Gandhi-Jinnah talks was nothing unusual. The Hindu press continued to support the attitude of Gandhi, while more outspoken elements of Hindu opinion even reproached him for having let down the Hindus by signifying his assent even to the formula of Rajagopalacharia. But the saner opinion was rather

disappointed as to why he made so much fuss about a trifling. If the principle of self-determination was to be accepted, as he professed he did accept it, then why qualify it and beat about the bush until the very essence of it is lost. If a settlement had got to be done on this principle, then why bargain for it and let India's fate hang in the balance? But few could muster courage to raise their voice and things went on as usual. The British had gained their end and the unfortunate deadlock continued as ever. Muslim opinion, however, emerged out stronger and more united than ever before and a considerable number of British statesmen had come to appreciate the Muslim claim.

Gandhi had now once again to focus Hindu opinion on himself and out of the two of his favourite stunts—the fast and the constructive programme—he had, under the advice of his friends, abandoned the first. The opportunity for the second was afforded by the "National Fund" that was being raised by his followers in the name of the late Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi and he set himself the task of utilising it for the "national welfare." How much of this national fund goes to put the Muslims in the wrong and to establish Congress "contact" among them remains yet to be seen, but it is evident that it definitely has a "national" purpose. Yet another national machinery is at work,

set up by Bombay capitalists, who are endeavouring to nationalise Indian industry and above all to nationalise British capital in India. The Musalmans, however, have not failed to see through the game.

At the close of the year 1944 the leaders without any following came once again to the forefront for the purpose which is still engaging their attention—to explore the channels of a compromise. But whether their labours are directed to evolve a formula for Hindu-Muslim settlement, as they have often professed, or for a settlement between the British and Hindus, could only be gauged when their report is out. Meanwhile the recent statement given by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to the Cultural Society of Allahabad, emphasising the unity of culture in India, may go a long way to illustrate as to what kind of a decision he and his colleagues are likely to arrive at.

What will be the future of Indian politics is not the object of this book, but events from day-to-day may judge as to what influence they will have on the mind of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and how they will govern his future activity. One of the most important of such events, also of very recent occurrence, is the return to power of the Congress in the Frontier Province, which is supposed to have tacit blessings of Gandhi. What is behind this move? "It is re-

cognised," suggested a Bombay paper, "that the Frontier Province is a special case. The Frontier with an overwhelming Muslim majority has always been handled with extra consideration by the Congress High Command. Much of the Congress claim to represent Muslims as well as Hindus results from its hold on the Frontier Province. It has, therefore, been treated as a pet child." Dr. Khan Sahib, on his assuming the charge of office, is reported to have said that he did so "to alleviate the misery of the people and to eliminate corruption," and when asked to reconcile his position with the 1939 decision of the Congress to withdraw from office, he said: "Don't you see the changes? Are they not before your eyes?" It is generally believed that Gandhi was agreeable in principle to the formation of a Congress Ministry in the Frontier Province. "Serve the people; that is your duty," is believed to have been the advice given by him to Dr. Khan Sahib.

What happened to Gandhi's invitation to the British power to withdraw? Why was that noble sentiment of serving the people lying dormant ever since 1939? Where was that sense of duty? These are the questions that remain to be answered. The times have changed, said Dr. Khan Sahib. The implication, perhaps, is that the war situation has improved; the British victory is no more an uncertainty, the Japanese fate is now sealed

and an attempt to blackmail the British has been utterly foiled. Some other tactics have, therefore, to be adopted. It is, perhaps, more useful "to wreck the constitution from within" or perhaps to make a mass contact from the seat of authority.

There may be any reason advanced for the change of this policy, but to the Musalmans of India it is quite clear that a heart, about which God only knows, remains still unchanged, and that a soul will never get tired of bringing about that change of heart.

APPENDIX I

MEMORANDUM OF THE NINETEEN

The following is the Memorandum which was submitted in October, 1916, to His Excellency the Viceroy by nineteen elected additional members of the Imperial Legislative Council with regard to post-war reforms :

There is no doubt that the termination of the war will see a great advance in the ideals of government all over the civilised world and especially in the British Empire, which entered into the struggle in defence of the liberties of weak and small nationalities and is pouring forth its richest blood and treasure in upholding the cause of justice and humanity in the international relations of the world. India has borne her part in this struggle and cannot remain unaffected by the new spirit of change for a better state of things. Expectations have been raised in this country and hopes held out that, after the war, the problems of Indian administration will be looked at from a new angle of vision. The people of India have good reasons to be grateful to England for the great progress in her material resources and the widening of her intellectual and political outlook under British rule, and for the steady, if slow, advance in her

national life, commencing with the Charter Act of India of 1833. Up to 1909, the Government of India was conducted by a bureaucracy almost entirely non-Indian in its composition and not responsible to the people of India. The reforms of 1909 for the first time introduced an Indian element in the direction of affairs in the administration of India. This element was of a very limited character. The Indian people accepted it as an indication on the part of the Government of a desire to admit the Indians into the inner counsels of the Indian Empire. So far as the Legislative Councils are concerned, the numbers of non-official members were merely enlarged with increased facilities for debate and interpellation. The Supreme Legislative Council retained an absolute official majority, and in the Provincial Legislative Councils, a non-official majority included nominated members and the European representatives. In measures largely affecting the people, whether of legislation or taxation, by which Europeans were not directly affected, the European members would naturally support the Government and the nominated members, being nominees of the Government, would be inclined to take the same side. Past experience has shown that this has actually happened on various occasions. The non-official majorities, therefore, in the Provincial Councils have proved largely illusory and give no real power to the representatives of the

people. The Legislative Councils, whether Supreme or Provincial, are at present nothing but advisory bodies, without any power of effective control over the Government, Imperial or Provincial. The people or their representatives are practically as little associated with the real government of the country as they were before the reforms except for the introduction of the Indian element in the Executive Council, where again the nomination rests entirely with the Government, the people having no voice in the selection of the Indian members.

DISABILITIES

The object which the Government had in view in introducing the reforms of 1909 was, as expressed by the Prime Minister in his speech in the House of Commons on the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill (1st April, 1909), that "it was most desirable in the circumstances to give to the people of India the feeling that these Legislative Councils are not mere automatons, the wires of which are pulled by the official hierarchy." This object, it is submitted, has not been attained. Apart from this question of the constitution of the Legislative and Executive Councils, the people labour under certain grave disabilities, which not only prevent the utilisation, but also lead to the wastage, of what is best in them, and are positively derogatory to their

sense of national self-respect. The Arms Act, which excludes from its operations Europeans and Anglo-Indians and applies only to the pure native of the country, the disqualification of Indians for forming or joining Volunteer corps, and their exclusion from the Commissioned ranks of the army, are disabilities which are looked upon with an irritating sense of racial differentiation. It would be bad enough if these were mere disabilities. Restrictions and prohibitions regarding the possession and use of arms have tended to emasculate the civil population in India and expose them to serious danger. The position of Indians in India is practically this, that they have no real part or share in the direction of the government of the country, and are placed under very great and galling disabilities.

The existence, moreover, of the system of indentured emigration gives to the British Colonies and the outside world the impression that Indians, as a whole, are no better than indentured coolies, who are looked upon as very little, if at all, above the slave. The present state of things makes the Indians feel that, though theoretically they are the equal subjects of the King, they hold a very inferior position in the British Empire. Other Asiatic races also hold the same, if not a worse, view about India and her status in the Empire. Humiliating as this position of inferiority is to the Indian mind, it is almost unbearable to the

youth of India, whose outlook is broadened by education and travel in foreign parts where they come in contact with the other free races. In the face of these grievances and disabilities, what has sustained the people is the hope and faith inspired by promises and assurances of fair and equal treatment which have been held out from time to time by our Sovereigns and British statesmen of high standing.

NOT A REWARD

In the crisis we are now going through, the Indian people have sunk domestic differences between themselves and the Government and have faithfully and loyally stood by the Empire. The Indian soldiers were eager to go to the battlefields of Europe, not as mercenary troops but as free citizens of the British Empire which required their services, and her civilian population was animated by one desire, namely, to stand by England in the hour of her need. Peace and tranquillity reigned throughout India when she was practically denuded of British and Indian troops. The Prime Minister of England, while voicing the sentiments of the English people in regard to India's part in this great war, spoke of Indians as " the joint and equal custodians of one common interest and future." India does not claim any reward for her loyalty, but she has a right to expect that the want of confidence on the part of Govern-

ment, to which she not unnaturally ascribes her present state, should now be a thing of the past and that she should no longer occupy a position of subordination but one of comradeship. This would assure the Indian people that England is ready and willing to help them to attain self-government under the aegis of the British Crown, and thus discharge the noble mission which she has undertaken and to which she has so often given voluntary expression through her rulers and statesmen. What is wanted is not merely good government or efficient administration, but government that is acceptable to the people because it is responsible to them. This is what, India understands, would constitute the changed angle of vision.

If, after the termination of the war, the position of India practically remains what it was before and there is no material change in it, it will undoubtedly cause bitter disappointment and great discontent in the country, and the beneficent effects of participation in common danger, overcome by common effort, will soon disappear, leaving no record behind save the painful memory of unrealised expectations. We feel sure that the Government is also alive to the situation and is contemplating measures of reform in the administration of the country. We feel that we should avail ourselves of this opportunity to respectfully offer to the Government our humble sugges-

tions as to the lines on which these reforms should proceed. They must, in our opinion, go to the root of the matter. They must give to the people real and effective participation in the government of the country, and also remove these irritating disabilities as regards the possession of arms and military career, which indicates want of confidence in the people and place them in a position of inferiority and helplessness. With this view, we would take the liberty to suggest the following measures for consideration and adoption :—

1. In all the Executive Councils, Provincial and Imperial, half the number of members should be Indians ; the European element in the Executive Councils should, as far as possible, be nominated from the ranks of men trained and educated in public life of England, so that India may have the benefit of a wider outlook and larger experience of the outside world. It is not absolutely essential that the members of the Executive Councils, Indians or Europeans, should have experience of actual administration, for, as in the case of ministers in England, the assistance of the permanent officials of the departments is always available to them. As regards Indians we venture to say that a sufficient number of qualified Indians, who can worthily fill the office of members of the Executive Council and hold portfolios is available. Our short

experience in this direction has shown how Indians like Sir S. P. Sinha, Sir Syed Ali Imam, the late Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer, Sir Shams-ul-Huda and Sir Sankaran Nair have maintained a high level of administrative ability in the discharge of their duties. Moreover, it is well known that the Native States, where Indians have opportunities, have produced renowned administrators like Sir Salar Jang, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Sir Seshadri Aiyer, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, not to mention the present administrators in the various Native States of India. The statutory obligations, now existing, that three of the members of the Supreme Executive Council shall be elected from the Public Services in India and similar provisions with regard to Provincial Councils should be removed. The elected representatives of the people should have a voice in the selection of the Indian members of the Executive Council and for that purpose a principle of election should be adopted.

2. All the Legislative Councils in India should have a substantial majority of elected representatives. These representatives, we feel sure, will watch and safeguard the interests of the masses and the agricultural population with whom they are in closer touch than any European officer, however sympathetic, can possibly be. The proceedings of the various Legislative Councils and the Indian National

Congress and the Muslim League bear ample testimony to the solicitude of the educated Indians for the welfare of the masses and their acquaintance with their wants and wishes. The franchise should be broadened and extended directly to the people, Muslims or Hindus, wherever they are in a minority, being given proper and adequate representation having regard to their numercial strength and position.

3. The total number of the members of the Supreme Council should not be less than 150, and of the Provincial Council not less than 100 for the major provinces, and not less than sixty to seventy-five for the minor provinces.

4. The Budget should be passed in the shape of money bills, fiscal autonomy being conceded to India.

5. The Imperial Legislative Council should have power to legislate on, and discuss and pass resolutions relating to, all matters of Indian administration, and the Provincial Councils should have similar powers with regard to Provincial administrations, save and except that the direction of military affairs, of foreign relations, declarations of war, the making of peace, and the entering into treaties, other than commercial, should be vested in the Government of India. As a safeguard

the Governor-General-in-Council or the Governor-in-Council, as the case may be, should have the right of veto which, however, should be exercised subject to certain conditions and limitations.

6. The Council of the Secretary of State should be abolished. The Secretary of State should, as far as possible, hold in relation to the Government of India a position similar to that which the Secretary of State for the Colonies holds in relation to the Colonies. The Secretary of State should be assisted by two permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should be an Indian. The salaries of the Secretary and Under-Secretaries should be placed on the British estimates.

7. In any scheme of Indian Federation, India should be given through her chosen representatives a place similar to that of the self-governing Dominions.

8. The Provincial Governments should be made autonomous, as stated in the Government of India's Despatch dated the 5th August 1911.

9. The United Provinces, as well as the other majority provinces, should have a Governor brought from the United Kingdom and should have an Executive Council.

10. A full measure of local self-government should be immediately granted.

11. The right to carry arms should be granted to Indians on the same conditions as to Europeans.

12. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers and units of a territorial army established in India.

13. Commissions in the army should be given to Indian youths under conditions similar to those applicable to Europeans.

APPENDIX II

BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE 1916

In presiding over the sixteenth Bombay Provincial Conference held at Ahmedabad in October 1916, the Hon'ble Mr. M. A. Jinnah delivered the following Address :

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I need hardly say that, in calling me to preside over the deliberations of the 16th Bombay Provincial Conference, you have conferred upon me the greatest honour that is within the gift of the people of this Presidency. I do not know why your choice has fallen upon me, but when the call came, I considered it my duty as a servant of the cause, to obey it, and I am here to-day amongst you. I most sincerely thank you for the honourable position to which you have raised me to-day and I shall try to do my duty as a President and I have no doubt that I shall have your entire support and co-operation in carrying out those duties during our deliberations.

This is the first time after many years since the unfortunate differences arose in Surat, that the United Provincial Conference

has met and the responsibility—the peculiar responsibility—therefore, rests on me and all of you correctly to voice the public opinion of the country and the Presidency.

Since the last meeting of the Provincial Conference at Poona we have—nay, the Empire has—lost one of its greatest soldiers, Lord Kitchener, and in Sir Pherozshah Mehta one of its greatest politicians and statesmen.

We deeply mourn the great loss of such men especially at this juncture of stress and great crisis through which India and the whole Empire is passing.

In Sir Chimunbhai Madhavlal, to our great sorrow, we have lost a captain of Industry and Commerce for which Ahmedabad is so famous. He was a great philanthropist and patron of learning and education.

In Mr. Daji Abaji Khare, I say with the deepest sorrow, we have lost a man of sturdy independence and a quiet but devoted worker for the cause of India. He rendered great, continuous, valuable services to the Indian National Congress from its early days of storm and difficulties.

In Mr. Govindrao Appaji Patel, I regret to say we have lost a zealous and devoted worker in the public cause in the

Province of Gujarat. May the soul of these great and devoted men who worked for the Empire and public cause rest in peace. And let us pray that we may soon have other such servants who may take their places and keep up their great traditions, and follow their noble examples and maintain the prestige and a great name of this mighty Empire.

INDIA'S SERVICES

Two questions above all are uppermost in our thoughts and are engrossing our minds at the present moment. The war and what is going to happen after the successful termination of this titanic struggle that has overshadowed the entire civilised world. India has stood faithful and loyal to the British Empire from the very commencement ; she has poured out her treasure and shed the blood of some of her noblest sons on the battlefields of Flanders, Africa, Egypt and Mesopotamia for the defence of the Empire. It may be said once for all that the people of India are proud to be a part of the British Empire and that their loyalty is as true and firm as that of any other Britisher in any part of the Empire, not excluding Great Britain and there is no doubt that India will to the end stand faithfully by the British Empire. But she wishes no longer to continue as the subject race, or, to put in the

words of Lord Hardinge, "the trusty dependent", but claims to be an equal partner with the other members of the Empire.

It is a matter of great rejoicing that the enemy has failed in his efforts at Verdun. The gallant and noble defence of Verdun by the French people has won the admiration of the world: with this signal failure on the part of the enemy, the advent of Roumania and the mighty army that England has raised with ample munition, has enabled the Allies successfully to take the offensive in the West. The initiative is no longer with the enemy and the tide has turned, and let us hope that it will not be long before the arms of the Allies are finally successful, and this great war ends in complete defeat of the brutal and aggressive Prussian militarism.

We have met here to-day to consider the position of our country and Province. There are many questions and problems which require our most earnest and serious consideration. We have met to discuss those questions and exchange our views regarding those problems. Naturally on taking a general survey of the situation, one has to face the questions—What progress have we made within the past half a century? What is our present position? What is to be our future? What steps should be

taken to remove the difficulties in our way? What measures should be adopted to further the progress of our country and to attain as soon as possible our most cherished goals, namely, Self-Government under the "aegis" of the British Crown and the Provincial Autonomy foreshadowed in the Delhi Despatch of Government of India dated the 25th August, 1911? It is said that there is peace and security in the country. It is said that there is prosperity in the country, although two of the greatest sons of India—Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji and Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt—the latter with his great administrative experience of India—do not agree with the statement that there is real prosperity in the country; it is said that the administration of the country is most efficient and the Collectors and the Commissioners are devoted to their duties and to the Districts where they work and that they have the interests and the welfare of the ryots at their heart; it is said that the British soldiers and British navy are protecting our lives and property, our hearths and homes are quite secure and safe. It is said that all is going well—everything is managed properly on behalf of the people by the Civil Service. Assuming all this to be correct and granting that there is peace, prosperity and efficient administration entirely in the hands of the Civil Servants, is that any reason that the control, the management and the administration of the affairs of our

country should for ever be continued as a monopoly in the hand of a bureaucratic Government? Is it any argument to say that since the bureaucracy have under certain conditions managed the affairs of the country well for half a century and more, that, therefore, they should be given a permanent monopoly—no matter what the changed conditions are and how much those conditions may have altered? Is that any reason why the Commissioned ranks in the Military and Naval services should be closed to the sons of India? Is that any reason for denying to India the right to join the Volunteer Corps and for continuing the application of the Arms Act?

PARLIAMENT AND INDIA

The first question that arises is, whether this system of administration conducted by the Civil Servants, who are neither under the control of or responsible to the people who pay their salaries, can any longer continue. It is said that they are responsible to the Secretary of State for India and that the Secretary of State for India in his turn is responsible to Parliament. I will only quote from one of the leading journals in England, the "Manchester Guardian," what appeared in its columns recently with regard to the responsibility of Parliament in matters affecting India:

"A new Viceroy and a new Secretary of State are in office. From the date of Lord Morley's translation seven years ago to that of Mr. Austen Chamberlain's acceptance of the India Office last summer, Indian questions in the Commons have been dealt with by the Under-Secretary; and it is surely an anomaly and sometimes of a scandal that not once since his appointment has the House had an opportunity of hearing from Mr. Chamberlain a full statement upon the condition of India or an exposition of his policy. And yet as the whole Empire realises, the position of India in the Imperial system is deeply affected by the movement of events as it will be by every measure of after-war policy that may be decided by England and her Allies. Moreover, the internal life of India today is undergoing changes more rapid than any hitherto known and the Government by deciding upon the publication of the Royal Commission's Report on the Public Services, has acknowledged the wisdom and necessity of discussion upon proposals for administrative reform. It is high time that Parliament began to take the affairs of India seriously and that the official myth that India wants nothing but to be let alone were exploded. If Parliament is to ignore the vast responsibility of the government of this mighty dependency, what is the use of a Parliament which calls itself Imperial?"

Ladies and gentlemen, is it not an anomaly that the domestic affairs of a country with a population of three hundred millions and more should practically be under the

control and the management of (as it is often said by ministers and writers) an alien bureaucracy, not responsible to the people of the country, under no control of the people who pay taxation, but only accountable to the Secretary of State for India, who himself has never been to India, and his Council, which again is composed mostly of retired Civil Servants, sitting seven thousand miles away from India; and the Secretary of State again in his turn theoretically responsible to Parliament for his stewardship, though in practice hardly ever is his stewardship called to account or critically investigated by Parliament? Lord Courtney deprecated the position of the Secretary of State for India in the following words:

> "The Secretary of State is a member of the Cabinet, which must possess the confidence of the House of Commons. In the end, the national will must have its way here as elsewhere; but checks and obstacles are interposed which, perhaps, insensibly moderates its force. No part of the expense involved in the Government of India comes before the House of Commons in Committee Supply. The salary of the Colonial Secretary is voted by Parliament and there is thus a possibility of annually reviewing his policy in the full activity of the Parliamentary sessions. The salary of the Secretary of State for India is paid by India and never comes before the House of Commons. At the end of the session, generally after the Appropriation Bill is

read a second time, the Indian Budget is submitted; and this consists of the review of the financial situation in India, followed by, after a desultory discussion, a resolution simply affirming that the Indian accounts show certain totals of Income and Expenditure, it may be doubted whether this does not betray too great a jealousy of the House of Commons. If the salary of the India's Secretary of State were submitted like the Colonial Secretary's to a vote, the opportunity for a real debate would be given, which, experience suggests, would be used rather than abused."

But I go further: Is it possible or natural as a rule for members of Parliament to grasp or grapple with questions affecting the internal administration and progress of India? When it was found that that was not possible in the case of Australia, Canada and South Africa, with few millions of population, would it not be miraculous if they continued to manage successfully the affairs of India by Parliament sitting in London? Having regard to the rapidly growing wants and demands of the people and the tremendous progress and changes that India is going through every few years, is it possible to govern India from Whitehall or Downing Street? To those who know India and understand India, it is clear that she no longer will merely obey, but wants to manage her own affairs. Peace, prosperity and security which satisfied her a decade ago are no longer enough. The soul of young

India has been roused and it yearns for political freedom. However well our physical and material wants may be provided for, that is not sufficient, India wants to raise herself to a status which will command the respect of the nations of the world for her and which will be befitting her national honour and self-respect. It is not now a question of a few posts; it is no longer a question of a few grievances or reform of internal matters of administration; it is a question of complete change of policy. The question at issue is not merely one of details, but it relates to the fundamental structure of the Government and we require a statesman to deal with the present situation and refashion and reconstruct the constitution of the Government of India. It is said that there is dissatisfaction in the country; it is said that a political agitation is kept up which is embarrassing to the Government; it is said that the Home Rule League movement is not desirable; but what is the cause of it all? Surely, those are not merely the signs of an excessive imagination as explained by some people for want of better knowledge. It is quite clear that this is due to the awakened political consciousness of the people, who demand a new policy and resent, and rightly resent, the differential treatment which is meted out to them socially, commercially and politically. It is a mistake to construe this resentment as a mark of disloyalty. It will be wisdom to root out the fundamental causes of dissatisfaction and discontent.

NEW SPIRIT

A new spirit is abroad. It is young India, who, to put it in the words of Lord Morley, "leave our universities intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, nationality and self-government," have to be satisfied It will be cold comfort to them to say that free institutions are the special privilege of the West. In order to meet the present situation, in my humble opinion, the members of the Indian Civil Service must now realise that, as the Government of India from autocracy was transferred to bureaucracy, so the time has come when from bureaucracy it must tend towards democracy. They have wielded the sceptre of supreme control for a long time and their dominion in India has not been without its benefits to the country. But the time has come, when, however unwilling—and naturally unwilling—they must part with their supreme control and dominion. Amongst the many benefits that have been conferred upon India by British Rule, perhaps the greatest of boons, albeit, an indirect one which India has received at the hands of the English people, has been the birth of a genuine spirit of patriotism. To put it in the words of a member of the Civil Service, who has given much thought to the problem of bureaucratic Government: "It is the patriotism which seeks its ideals, not in military glory or the apotheosis of a king, but in the advancement

of the people. Informed by this spirit and strong in the material benefits flowing from British Rule, India now knocks at the portal of democracy; bureaucracy has served its purpose. Though the Indian Civil Service were manned by angels from heaven, the incurable defects of bureaucratic Government must pervert their best intentions and make them foes of political progress. It must now stand aside and in the interest of the country it has served so long and so truly, make over the dominion to other hands not in dishonour but in honour, proudly as shipbuilders who deliver the seamen the completed ship, may they now yield up the direction of India." This will require self-abnegation, self-sacrifice—not for their own nation but for India, for humanity. It will require sympathy and understanding such as no nation has ever felt for a foreign people. Will the Civil Service rise to this supreme duty they owe to the three hundred millions of people of this country? Let me quote the words of His Excellency Lord Hardinge from his speech at the United Service Club which he addressed to a large number of representative officials. He said :

> "England has instilled into this country the culture and civilisation of the West with all its ideals of liberty and self-respect. It is not enough for her now to consider only the material outlook of India. It is necessary for her to cherish the aspirations of which she has herself sown the seed

and English officials are gradually awakening to the fact that high as were the aims and remarkable the achievements of their predecessors, a still nobler task lies before them in the present and the future, guiding the uncertain and faltering steps of Indian development along sure and safe paths. The new role of guide, philosopher and friend is opening before you and it is worthy of your greatest efforts. It requires in you gifts of imagination and sympathy and imposes upon you self-sacrifice, for it means that slowly, but surely you must divest yourselves of some of the powers you have hitherto wielded."

It is universally recognised that if you deprive a nation of all share in its own government, in the forging of its destiny, you emasculate its energies, undermine its character and sear, as if with a hot iron, its self-respect. In the sphere of intellect such a government spells not progress, but decay.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

This now brings me to the question as to what should be done. This being a Provincial Conference, I will now confine myself only to the Provincial Government. The first principle that is to be observed is the principle of devolution and decentralisation. But this, as I understand, implies that the ultimate control of the Imperial authority in Legislative as well as in Executive matters, is

kept intact and in reserve to be used whenever necessary. And a better illustration of this principle cannot be found than in the Home Rule Bill which was passed by the House of Commons conferring self-Government on Ireland. Prof. Morgan in an authoritative exposition of the New Irish Constitution points out that " the Bill is quite outside the category of Federalism in that, while it proposes a delegation of authority both in the Legislative and Executive, there is none of the distribution of Sovereignty which is a distinguishing characteristic of a Federation. The Executive power in Ireland will continue vested in His Majesty. The Legislative authority will be subject to an Imperial veto and to the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament with its powers of concurrent Legislation and the Irish courts will be subject to the Appellate Jurisdiction of an Imperial Court." In other words the Imperial power will be supreme in the Executive, the Legislative and the Judicial sphere. The position of the Executive and Legislative authorities in India is quite similar and although the element of self-government in every one of them is more or less non-existent, the legal relation between the Imperial and Provincial Governments is based on the same principle.

The Provincial Council is supposed to have a non-official majority. The non-official representatives are divided into elected mem-

bers, nominated members, that is to say, nominated by Government and European representatives. In measures affecting the people in which Europeans are not directly concerned, they support the Government. Nominated members, being nominees of Government, are naturally inclined to take the side of Government. Past experience has shown that this has actually happened on various occasions. The non-official majority, therefore, in the Provincial Council is illusory and gives no real power to the representatives of the people. The Provincial Council at the present moment is nothing but an advisory body without possessing any power or effective control over the Government. The people or their representatives are as little associated with the real Government of the Province as they were before the Reforms of 1909 except for the introduction of one Indian member in the Executive Council of His Excellency the Governor, where again the nomination rests entirely with the Government, the people having no voice in the selection of the Indian member. The object, which the Government had in view in introducing the Reforms of 1909, as expressed by the Prime Minister in his speech in the House of Commons on the second reading of the India Council Bill, (April 1st, 1909), "that it was desirable in the circumstances to give to people of India a feeling that these Legislative Councils are not mere automatons, the wires

of which are pulled by the official hierarchy," it is quite clear, has not been attained.

FORM OF ADMINISTRATION

In order to give the people of the Province the real and effective voice in the Government of the Province for which they are ripe, the following brief outline may be indicated as to the form of administration that should be set up in our Province :

1. The Province should have a Governor appointed from England at the head of the administration.

2. A Cabinet or Executive Council of six members, three of whom should be Indians, with the following portfolios :

(*a*) Provincial (including Law and Justice similar to Home Member).

(*b*) Finance.

(*c*) Agriculture, Irrigation and Public Works.

(*d*) Education.

(*e*) Local Self-Government (including Sanitation and Medical Relief).

(*f*) Industries and Commerce.

While members of the Indian Civil Service should still be eligible for appointment to the Executive Council, no places in the Council should be reserved for them as at present under the Statute, which makes it obligatory that a certain number of the members of the Executive Council should be appointed from the Public Services.

The best men available should be appointed, whether English or Indian.

3. A substantial majority in the Council should be of elected members returned by different constituencies and interests. Muslims and Hindus, wherever they are in a minority, should have proper, adequate and effective representation, having regard to their numerical strength and position. There should be no nominated non-official members except as experts.

4. The Council should have the power to pass all provincial legislation and determine Provincial taxation. All resolutions in connection with the budget as also on questions of general administration should take effect unless vetoed by the Governor. More frequent meetings, and longer continuous sittings will also have to be provided for. But the members of Executive Council shall not depend individually or collectively on the support of the majority of the Council or for

holding their offices. The Provincial Government, reconstituted and working under the control of the Legislative Council, should have complete charge of the internal administration of the province. It should have independent financial powers and the present financial relationship between the Provincial Government and the Government of India should be largely revised or, if necessary, reversed. The Provincial Government should be required to make an annual contribution to the Government of India, fixed for a definite period. Subject to this arrangement the Imperial and Provincial Governments should develop their separate systems of finance, the Provincial Government being given powers of taxation and borrowing within certain limits.

No scheme of provincial autonomy can be complete without the corresponding changes of a liberalising character being introduced into the District and Municipal administration.

It is always a difficult task to lay down any cut and dried scheme in a presidential address, but here again I shall venture to make a few suggestions affecting the fundamental principles that underlie local self-government in India and here I would quote from no less an authority than Lord Morley's Reform Despatch dated the 27th November, 1909. It says: "The principles that should inspire and regulate measures with this aim, can hardly be

laid down on sounder and clearer terms than in the Resolution published by the Government of India on the 18th of May 1882. I do not know where to look for a better expression of the views that should govern our policy under this important head."

This resolution although passed as far back as 1882 by the Government of that renowned Viceroy, Lord Ripon, has not still been carried out fully or given real effect to.

The first and foremost change that is necessary to be introduced in the various bodies, is that they should be wholly elected, the Provincial Government alone reserving to itself and exercising powers of control; that the present official control exercised by the Collectors and Commissioners should be removed; that the Chairman should be elected by the Boards and the *ex officio* President should be done away with; that a portion of Excise revenue or some other definite source of revenue should be made over to these Bodies so that they may have adequate resources at their disposal for the due performance of their duties.

To quote again from Lord Morley's Reform Despatch, this is what he says:

"I will venture to quote some passages in this memorable deliverance. Explaining the proposal for Local Self-Government of that date the Government of India place themselves on ground which may well be our ground also. It is not primarily, they say, 'with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and supported, it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education,' and again, 'there appears to be great force in the argument that so long as the chief Executive officers are, as a matter of course, Chairmen of the Municipal and District Committees, there is little chance of these committees affording any effective training to their members taking any real interest in local business. The non-official members must be led to feel that real power is placed in their hands and that they have real responsibilities to discharge.' This anticipation has been, to some extent, warranted by experience. Funds have not existed for an efficient Executive staff. The official element within the Local Bodies has been in many places predominant. Non-official members have not been induced to such an extent as was hoped, to take a real interest in Local business, because their powers and their responsibilities were not real. If Local Self-Government has so far been no marked success as a training ground, it is mainly for the reason that the constitution of the Local Bodies departed from what was affirmed in the Resolution to be 'the true principle' that 'the control should be exercised from without rather than from within; the Government should revise and check the acts of Local Bodies but not dictate them.'

> I have no doubt that the Government of India to-day will affirm and actively shape their policy upon the principle authoritatively set forth by their predecessors in 1882: 'It would be hopeless to expect any real development of self-government if the Local Bodies were subject to check and interference in matters of detail, and the respective powers of Government and of the various Local Bodies should be clearly and distinctly defined by Statute so that there may be as little risk of friction and misunderstanding as possible within the limits to be laid down in each case. However the Governor-General-in-Council is anxious that the fullest possible liberty of action should be given to Local Bodies.'"

ARMS ACT

I have made a few general observations and dealt with the Provincial Government and the question of Local Self-Government. There are many other questions and important questions which I see are placed on the agenda in the form of Resolutions and I have no doubt that the speakers in charge of those Resolutions will adequately deal with them. But I cannot conclude my address without referring at least to some of the burning questions, and amongst them the most important question is the question of admission of the Indians to Commissioned ranks of the Army and Navy, the removal of the most irritating and humiliating disabilities created by statutes which have raised a bar

against the people of India in joining Volunteer Corps, no matter what their rank or position in life may be ; the unjust application of the Arms Act to the people of India from which the Europeans are exempted. The Press Act and its arbitrary provisions and still more its arbitrary enforcement by the Executive which is subject to no judicial check, so far as the decisions of the High Courts at the present moment go ; the Defence of India Act, which was purely a War measure and to which the representatives of the people of India assented when it came before the Imperial Council, is worked in a manner in some cases which is highly undesirable ; the undue and unjustifiable delay in making elementary education free and compulsory in the selected areas is the cause of the greatest dissatisfaction and disappointment to the people.

INDIANS AND THE ARMY AND NAVY

Now to take the question of the Army and the Navy, the only two arguments which have hitherto been advanced are that the people of the country are not fit except some sects or tribes who have followed the profession of arms as a hereditary profession. Now, first of all, is that a correct hypothesis ? At the outbreak of the war, the princes and the people of India of all classes and sections, with one voice, volunteered to support the Empire with their money and blood. Young

students in England belonging to different classes of poeple in India, from all parts of India studying at their Universities, volunteered to enlist themselves as Territorials. For an answer, they were told that being Indians, their services could not be accepted. Then they made representations to the Secretary of State for India expressing their indignation at this differential treatment, it was said that the whole military question affecting India will be considered after the war. In Bengal a movement was started in which Sir S. P. Sinha took a leading part to start a Volunteer Corps, a large sum of money was collected and six hundred young men belonging to respectable families enlisted themselves ready to go to the front, to fight the battle of Empire. But they were told that that cannot be. Does the profession of a soldier require more brains, greater capacity, ingenuity than that of a lawyer, a doctor or a poet or a scientist? If Indians are good enough to fight as sepoys and privates, why are they not good enough to occupy the position of officers? There cannot be a better answer than what the Indian soldiers have achieved in this war. Several of them are the proud possessors of the Victoria Cross, which, to a soldier, is the greatest honour and decoration that can be conferred upon him by the King-Emperor.

The second argument is that an army with a preponderance of the Indian element

may be turned against the British Government and here I cannot but quote a more complete answer than what was given by the President of the Indian National Congress, Sir S. P. Sinha. He said: "I venture to submit in reply that anarchists and seditionists may succeed in winning over an ignorant and mercenary army, but they will never succeed in winning over a truly national army, drawn from a people made increasingly loyal by the spread of education and liberal self-governing institutions. The opening of a military career will fire the imagination and stimulate the virility of India in a way that nothing else can do. And is it too much for India to expect to be treated in the same way as Russia treats her subject races—especially after the proof India has given of the prowess of her sons and their devotion and loyalty to the Imperial Standard?"

These arguments equally apply to the Navy, where the sons of India cannot aspire to a higher position than that of Lascar in the Mercantile Marine. The time is not far distant when perhaps India will have to consider what fleet she should raise primarily for Indian defences and as a contribution to the Imperial Navy.

The Press Act was a most unwelcome measure from its very inception. It has been characterised as a serious menace to the free-

dom of the Press in India; but the harsh manner in which it is enforced has roused the strongest opposition and created great discontent. The safeguards provided by the Act have proved illusory and incapable of being enforced as declared by the High Court of Calcutta. It is high time that the Government appointed a Committee of official and non-official members to consider its working since 1910 and recommend what course should be adopted to allay the just public resentment and discontent with regard to this measure.

DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT

The Defence of India Act as a War measure was accepted by the country. But its working has proved that it is a dangerous weapon placed in the hands of the Executive on whom there is no judicial check of any kind whatsoever. It would be wise to follow the procedure adopted in England to have a Committee who should have the power of revising the orders of the Executive Officers and such a Committee should have an equal number of Indian members.

I have the honour and privilege of knowing His Excellency the Governor. If I may say so, Lord Willingdon is all kindness and courtesy. I hope, I am not giving out any secrets when I say that I personally know that he is in full sympathy with our ideals and

aspirations and has done much to support them. But I cannot help saying that it was a matter of profound regret that the Bombay Government of which he is the head, should have thought proper to apply the Defence of India Act to that great English lady, Mrs. Besant. Whether we agree with her or not, whether we see eye to eye with her or not on certain questions, I believe I am expressing the universal feeling of this Presidency and, for the matter of that, the whole country at large, that the order of the local Government prohibiting Mrs. Besant to enter our Province was received with the utmost sorrow and shock. It is a grave reflection on the fair name of this Presidency and I feel it is calculated to do great harm to the dignity and the prestige of the Government itself.

With regard to elementary education being made free and compulsory, so much has been said that at this juncture I do not wish to enter into details; but the renaissance of India can only be achieved truly by a true and real foundation to be laid for self-government ultimately based on a proper system of education of national character, which in course of time would produce more and more men worthy of managing the affairs of our own country. I may have occasion at a not very distant future, when I should perhaps like to deal with this important question in detail.

. THE EDUCATED CLASSES

Before I leave this subject, I may point out that it is often put forward as a favourite argument that India is not fit for self-government because the educated classes are as yet a very small fraction in the country. In the first instance the Government, although they have recently bestirred themselves in the cause of education, have never seriously and earnestly grappled with the problem of Elementary or Primary education in India. The question has always been shelved on one ground or the other, such as want of funds, want of school buildings, want of trained teachers. On the other hand, we are told that we have not got a sufficient number of educated people. Who is responsible for it after one hundred years of British Rule? But the test of the fitness of the people for self-government is not that every man, woman and child should be first educated. The hollowness of this plea was ably exposed by the late Mr. George Yule in his address as President of our National Congress in 1888. "Quoting Prof. Thorold Rogers, he pointed out that a hundred years ago, not one man in ten or one woman in twenty knew how to read or write in England. Going another century or two back, he added, the people of England, man and boy, high and low with the exception of a mere handful, were steeped in gross

ignorance and yet there was a House of Commons." And, I believe, we have now at the present moment in India twenty millions who can read and write.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Now I come to the all-absorbing question which stirred India because of the declaration of the "Entente Cordiale" between the Hindus and the Muslims made in the City of Bombay last Christmas. I believe all thinking men are thoroughly convinced that the key-note of our real progress lies in the good-will, concord, harmony and co-operation between the two great sister communities. The true focus of progress is centred in their union and remember this is a matter which is entirely in our own hands. It was three years ago that the All-India Muslim League adopted the ideal of self-government under the "aegis" of the British Crown which was hailed by the Indian National Congress at Karachi where the following resolution was passed :

> *That this Congress places on record its warm appreciation of the adoption by the All-India Muslim League of the ideal of self-government for India within the British Empire and expresses its complete accord with the belief that the League has so emphatically declared*

> *at its last session that the political future of the country depends on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities in the country which has been the cherished ideal of the Congress. The Congress most heartily welcomes the hope expressed by the League that the leaders of the different communities will make every endeavour to find a* modus operandi *for joint and concerted action on all questions of national good and earnestly appeals to all the sections of the people to help the object which we all have at heart.*

Since then the programme of the All-India Muslim League has been more and more approximated to that of the Indian National Congress. There is but one question besides the question of cow-killing and street-music which has proved not only a thorny question, but an obstacle which has kept the two communities hitherto apart. But the solution is not difficult. It requires a true spirit of conciliation and give and take. The Muslims want proper, adequate and effective representation in the Council Chambers of the country and in the District and Municipal Boards, a claim which no right-minded Hindu disputes for a moment. But the Muslims further require that representation in the various boards and Council Chambers should

be secured to them by means of separate electorates. This question of separate electorates from the top to bottom has been before the country ever since 1909 and, rightly or wrongly, the Muslim community is absolutely determined for the present to insist upon separate electorates. To most of us the question is no more open to further discussion or argument as it has become a mandate of community. As far as I understand, the demand for separate electorates is not a matter of policy but a matter of necessity to the Muslims who require to be roused from the coma and torpor into which they had fallen so long. I would therefore appeal to my Hindu brethren that in the present state of position they should try to win the confidence and trust of the Muslims who are, after all, in the minority in the country. If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demands.

There are other questions of most vital and paramount importance to both the Hindus and Muslims, that require united concerted action. Differences in details, such as method of securing to Muslims their adequate share in the Council Chambers, Municipal and District Boards should not be allowed to create an *impasse* and one side or the other must give in. I would, therefore, appeal to my Hindu friends to be

generous and liberal and welcome and encourage other activities of Muslims even if it involves some sacrifice in the matter of separate electorates. And I may have to say something more fully on this question at the sessions of the All-India Muslim League I have been called to preside next Christmas. But the committees appointed by the Congress and the League in Bombay will soon meet at Calcutta to formulate a scheme of reforms and I most fervently pray that they will both adopt a scheme that may go out to the world as the united demand of India.

One thing is, however, clear. It is not a question of a few more seats going to the Muslims or the Hindus. It is a question, as I have already pointed out, in the first instance, of transfer of the power from the bureaucracy to democracy. Let us concentrate all our attention and energy on this question alone for the present.

The Hindus and the Muslims should stand united and use every constitutional and legitimate means to effect that transfer as soon as possible. But for a real New India to arise, all petty and small things must be given up. " She is now India irrendenta and to be redeemed, all Indians must offer to sacrifice not their good things, but all those evil things they cling to blindly—

their hates and their divisions, their pride in what they should be thoroughly ashamed of, their quarrels and misunderstandings. These were a sacrifice that God would love."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have done. In conclusion, let me tell you that, after all, a great deal depends upon ourselves. Hindus and Muslims united and firm, the voice of the three hundred million of people vibrating throughout the length and breadth of the country, will produce a force which no power on earth can resist. India has, I believe, turned a corner. She has passed through great sufferings and borne them patiently for centuries. There is now a bright and a great future in front of her. We are on a straight road; the promised land is within sight. "Forward" is the motto and clear course for young India. But in the onward march, we must be circumspect, and never lose sight of the true perspective before us. And wisdom and caution should be our watchwords.

APPENDIX III

MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DELIVERED BY M. A. JINNAH AT LUCKNOW

Ladies and Gentlemen,

No more conventional words are needed on my part to express my deep thanks for the great privilege you have conferred on me by selecting me as President of the ninth Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League. The honour is the highest in the gift of the Muslim community, to which those alone may aspire who have given freely of their thought and time to the service of the communal cause. I am fully sensible of how little I have done to deserve such distinction, nor could I have the presumption to desire it with such a clear sense of my own unworthiness. This choice, however, has come to me in the nature of a mandate from my community and in such cases individual considerations cannot and must not stand in the way of the larger will. I accept the great and heavy responsibilities of the position only in the belief that I can unreservedly count on your sympathy, zeal and ready co-operation in the great task that lies before us.

As President of the Bombay Presidency Provincial Conference, which was held at Ahmedabad only a few weeks ago, I have had to make a pronouncement; but at the time I accepted the honour of presiding over the Conference, I did not know that I should have this unique honour and responsibility of expressing my views as your President again within so short a time. Much of the ground was covered by me in that speech of mine. I do not now wish to repeat what I said then, nor do I wish to deal with many great and burning questions and problems that affect India in her internal administration. They will, no doubt, be placed before you in the form of resolutions which will be submitted by the speakers in charge of them for your deliberation and consideration. At the present moment the attention of the country at large is entirely concentrated and solely rivetted on the war and what will happen after the war. I have, therefore, decided mainly to deal with the situation in my presidential address on those lines, and I will endeavour to place before you my humble views for your consideration, at the same time hoping and trusting that my feeble voice may reach those who hold the destinies of India in their hands.

ANNUAL STOCK-TAKING

In this great annual meeting of representative Musalmans from all parts of India, who

have come to deliberate and take counsel together on the large and important issues that govern our destiny in this land, it will not be out of place to take a wide survey of the conditions in which our lot is cast. This is primarily the time for annual stock-taking, for testing our position in the light of the experience of the past year, for an intelligent preparation of ways and means for meeting the demands of the future, and, above all, for refreshing, so to speak, the ideals that feed the springs of our faith, hope and endeavour. This I take to be the fundamental object for which the annual sessions of political bodies like the All-India Muslim League are held. The circumstances, however, in which we meet to-day, are exceptional and mark a new epoch in the history of our country. All that is great and inspiring in the common affairs of men, for which the noblest and most valiant of mankind have lived and wrought and suffered in all ages and all climes, is now moving India out of its depths. The whole country is awakening to the call of its destiny and is scanning the new horizons with eager hope. A new spirit of earnestness, confidence and resolution is abroad in the land. In all directions are visible the stirrings of a new life. The Musalmans of India would be false to themselves and the traditions of their past, had they not shared to the full the new hope that is moving India's patriotic sons to-day, or had

they failed to respond to the call of their country. Their gaze, like that of their Hindu fellow-countrymen, is fixed on the future.

But, gentlemen of the All-India Muslim League, remember that the gaze of your community and of the whole country is at this moment fixed on you. The decisions that you may take in this historic hall, and at this historic Session of the League, will go forth with all the force and weight that can legitimately be claimed by the chosen leaders and representatives of 70 million of Indian Musalmans. On the nature of those decisions will depend in a large measure the fate of India's future—of India's unity and of our common ideals and aspirations for constitutional freedom. The moment for decision has arrived. The alternatives are clear and unmistakable. The choice lies in our hands.

THE WAR

The future historian, while chronicling the cataclysms and convulsions of these times, will not fail to note the conjunction of events of boundless influence and scope that have made the fortunes of India so largely depend on the united will and effort of this generation. These events have, of course, flowed from the world-shaking crisis into which Europe was plunged in August, 1914. What this dark period has meant in accumulated agony,

suffering, destruction and loss to mankind, is beyond any standard of computation known to history. With the unfolding of this appalling tragedy have emerged into light, stark, elemental forces of savagery that lay behind a bright and glittering mask of "Kultur," which threaten to sweep away the very foundations of civilised life and society. The issues which are in death grips on the battlefield of three continents, go to the roots of the principles on which the fabric of modern civilisation has been reared by the energy and toil of countless generations. Freedom, justice, right and public law are pitted against despotism, aggression, anarchy and brute force and the result of this deadly combat will decide the future of mankind—whether the end will come with a stricken and shattered world, lying bleeding and helpless under the iron heel of the tyrant, with the whole of humanity stripped bare off its hope and faith and reduced to bondage, or whether the hideous nightmare will pass away and the world, redeemed by the blood of the heroic defenders of civilisation and freedom, regain its heritage of peace and enter a period of vaster and more glorious synthesis and reconstruction.

INDIA'S LOYALTY

These are tremendous issues and the blood of every Indian with his usual gift of

quick moral perception is stirred by the feeling that he is a citizen of an empire which has staked its all in a supreme endeavour to vindicate the cause of freedom and of right. What India has given in this fellowship of service and sacrifice has been a free and spontaneous tribute to the ideals of the great British nation, as well as a necessary contribution to the strength of the fighting forces of civilisation, which are so valiantly rolling back the tides of scientifically organised barbarism. In this willing service of the people of India, there has been no distinction of class or creed. It has come from every part of the land and from every community with equal readiness and devotion. In this service there has been no cold, calculating instinct at work. It has sprung from a clear, compelling sense of duty and moral sympathy and not from any commercial desire to make a safe political investment. India's loyalty to the Empire has set no price on itself.

RECONSTRUCTION

After such colossal upheavals as this war, the world cannot quietly slip back into its old grooves of life and thought. Much of what the existing generations have known in social and political arrangements is visibly passing away under a deluge of blood and fire. The thick crust of materialism and pampered case, the inertia of habit, the

cramping weight of convention and of institutions that have outlived their use, have fallen off from the lives of the great Western Democracies under the stress of this great struggle for their existence. They have been thrown back on themselves. In the hot furnace of elemental passions, the trifles are being burnt to ashes, the gold is being made pure of dross ; and when the terrible ordeal has passed, the liberated soul will feel almost primeval ease and power to plan, to build and to create fresh, ampler and freer conditions of life for the future. The range of choice would be unlimited and the need for bold constructive efforts in various directions vital and urgent. Europe after the war will call for statesmanship of a new order to undertake the gigantic tasks of peace. The greatest victory for freedom will have to be conserved. Free nations will have to learn to live freely and intensely. Freedom itself will have to be organised, its bounds made vaster and its powers of self-preservation strengthened and increased.

THE INDIAN PROBLEM

These tasks have peculiar urgency and significance in the case of the vast and various communities comprising the British Empire. And among the complex series of problems relating to the Imperial reconstruction awaiting British statesmanship, none is of more anxious moment than the problem of reconstruction

in India. I need not set about to discuss in detail the Indian problem in all its bearings. It has been discussed threadbare by all men from every conceivable angle of vision. However, there are two cardinal facts about the Indian situation which practical statesmanship will have to take into account while addressing itself to the study of the problem and its adequate solution. There is, first, the great fact of the British standards of administration, which, while retaining absolute power of initiative, direction and decision, has maintained for many decades unbroken peace and order in the land, administered even-handed justice, brought the Indian mind, through a widespread system of Western education, into contact with the thought and ideals of the West and thus led to the birth of a great and living movement for the intellectual and moral regeneration of the people. Here I may quote from the speech of H. E. Lord Chelmsford delivered in Calcutta the other day: "The growing self-respect and self-consciousness of her (India's) people are plants that we ourselves have watered." Secondly, there is the fact of the existence of a powerful, unifying process—the most vital interesting result of Western education in the country—which is creating out of the diverse mass of race and creed a new India fast growing to unity of thought, purpose and outlook, responsive to new appeals of territorial patriotism and nationality, stirring with new energy

and aspiration and becoming daily more purposeful and eager to recover its birth-right, to direct its own affairs and govern itself. To put it briefly, we have a powerful and efficient bureaucracy of British officers responsible only to the British Parliament, governing with methods known as benevolent despotism, a people that have grown fully conscious of their destiny and are peacefully struggling for political freedom. This is the Indian problem in a nutshell. The task of British statesmanship is to find a prompt, peaceful and enduring solution of this problem.

If it were possible to isolate the tangled group of social and political phenomena and subject it to a thorough investigation by reason unalloyed by sentiment, it would be infinitely easier to find a safe and sure path for Indian political development and advance. But, as you know, pure, unalloyed reason is not the chief motive power in human things. In the affairs of our common secular existence, we have to deal not with angels but with men, with passions, prejudices, personal idiosyncrasies, innumerable cross-currents of motive, of desire, hope, fear and hate. The Indian problem has all such formidable complications in its texture. We have, for instance, the large and trained body of English officials who carry on the administration of the country and exercise power over the well-being and happiness of the teeming millions of this land.

They are most of them hard-working, efficient and conscientious public servants, and yet they are beset by the prejudices and limitations that mark them as a class apart. They are naturally conservative, have a rooted horror of bold administrative changes or constitutional experiments, are reluctant to part with power or associate Indians freely in the government of the country. Their main concern appears to be to work the machine smoothly, content to go through their common round from day to day ; and they feel bored and worried and upset by the loud, confident and unsettling accents of new India. All this is eminently human ; but it also means an enormous aggravation of the difficulties in the path of final settlement. It means in actual experience the growth of a tremendous class-interest, the interest of the governing class as distinct from, if not wholly opposed to, the interest of the governed. It is, in fact, the existence of this vast, powerful and by no means silent " interest " that explains the origin and wide currency of certain shallow, bastard and desperate political maxims, which are flung into the face of Indian patriots at the least provocation. They are familiar enough to all students of Indian affairs. As a sample, we may take the following :

(1) The Democratic institutions cannot thrive in the environment of the East. (Why? Were democratic institutions

unknown to the Hindus and Muslims in the past? What was the village Panchayat? What are the history, the traditions, the literature and the precepts of Islam? There are no people in the world who are more democratic even in their religion than the Musalmans.)

(2) The only form of government suitable to India is autocracy, tempered by English (European) efficiency and character. (All nations have had to go through the experience of despotic or autocratic government at one time or the other in the history of the world. Russia was liberated to a certain extent only a few years ago. France and England had to struggle before they conquered the autocracy. Is India to remain under the heel of novel form of autocracy in the shape of bureaucracy for all time to come, when Japan and even China have set up constitutional Governments on the democratic lines of Great Britain and America?)

(3) (a) The interests of the educated classes are opposed to those of the Indian masses and (b) the former would oppress the latter if the strong protecting hand of the British officials

were withdrawn. (This astonishing proposition beats all reason and sense. It is suggested that we who are the very kith and kin of the masses, most of us springing from the middle classes, are likely to oppress the people if more power is conferred; that the masses require protection at the hands of the English officials, between whom and the people there is nothing in common; that our interests are opposed to those of the masses—in what respect, it is never pointed out—and that, therefore, the monopoly of the administrative control should continue in the hands of non-Indian officials. This insidious suggestion, which is so flippantly made, is intended to secure the longest possible lease for the bureaucracy and to enjoy their monopoly. But it can neither stand the light of facts, nor the analysis of truth. One has only to look at the past records of the Congress for more than a quarter of a century and of the All-India Muslim League to dismiss this specious plea. The educated people of this country have shown greater anxiety and solicitude for the welfare and advancement of the masses than for any other question during the last quarter of century.)

(4) Indians are unfit to govern themselves. (With this last question I propose to deal later in my speech).

These are a few of the baseless and silly generalities in which the advocates of the existing methods of Indian governance indulge freely and provocatively when the least menace arises to the monopoly of the bureaucratic authority and power.

INTERVAL SITUATION

Again, if we turn to the internal situation in India, we meet with a set of social, ethnological and cultural conditions unparalleled in recorded history. We have a vast continent inhabited by 315 millions of people sprung from various racial stock, inheriting various cultures and professing a variety of religious creeds. This stupendous human group thrown together under one physical and political environment, is still in various stages of intellectual and moral growth. All this means a great diversity of outlook, purpose and endeavour. Every Indian nationalist who has givien close and anxious thought to the problem of nation-building in India, fully realises the magnitude of his task. He is not afraid of admitting frankly that difficulties exist in his path. Such difficulties have no terrors for him. They are already vanishing before the forces which are developing in the New Spirit.

INDIA FOR THE INDIANS

Well, these are the broad aspects of the Indian problem and they will give you a fairly general idea of the obstacles that stand in the way of a full and speedy realisation of the ideals of Indian patriots. We have a powerfully organised body of conservative " interest " on the one hand, and a lack of complete organisation of the national will and intelligence on the other. There is, however, one fundamental fact, that stands out clear and unmistakable, which no sophistry of argument and no pseudo-scientific theories about colour and race can disguise. Amid the class of warring interests and the noise of foolish catchwords, no cool-headed student of Indian affairs can lose sight of the great obvious truism that India is in the first and the last resort for the Indians. Be the time near or distant, the Indian people are bound to attain to their full stature as a self-governing nation. No force in the world can rob them of their destiny and thwart the purposes of Providence. British statesmanship has not become bankrupt or utterly bereft of its faculty of clear political perception ; and it is, therefore, bound to recognise that the working of the law of national development in India, which came to birth with the British Rule itself, and is daily gathering momentum under the pressure of the world-forces of freedom and progress, must sooner or later produce a change in the princi-

ples and methods of Indian governance. It is inevitable. Then why not fight against it, why ignore it, why should not rather there be honest, straightforward efforts to clear the way of doubts, suspicions and senseless antagonisms to that glorious consummation? Leaving aside the hare-brained twaddle of the tribe of scientific peddlers who love to sit in judgment on the East and ape political philosophy, no man with the least pretensions to common-sense, can affect to maintain that Indian humanity is stamped with a ruthless psychology and cramped for ever within the prison of its skull. If the Indians are not the *pariahs* of Nature, if they are not out of the pale or operation of the laws that govern mankind elsewhere, if their minds can grow in knowledge and power and can think and plan and organise together for the common needs of the present and for the common hopes of the future, then the only future for them is self-government, *i.e.*, the attainment of the power to apply through properly organised channels, the common national will and intelligence to the needs and tasks of their national existence. The cant of unfitness must die. The laws of nature and the doctrines of common humanity are not different in the East.

OFFICIAL ATTITUDE

It is a great relief to think that some of the responsible British statesmen have defi-

nitely pronounced in recent years that India's ambition to attain self-government is neither a catastrophe nor a sin. Indeed, that great and sympathetic Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, whose memory will always be cherished with affection by the people of this country, for the first time recognised the legitimacy of that vital Indian aspiration. Other indications have not been wanting of late, which go to show that our national dream and purpose is gaining the stamp of even official approval. There is, however, a world of difference between a theoretical approval of an ideal and its practical application. The supreme duty of the men that lead the forces of Indian progress is to insist that India's rulers should definitely set the ideal before them as the ultimate goal to be attained within reasonable time and should accelerate the pace accordingly. All our difficulties now arise from the steady reluctance on the part of Indian officialdom to keep this end definitely in view and move faster. Mere sympathy divorced from resolute and active progressive policy can hardly ameliorate the situation. Honeyed words alone cannot suffice. We may congratulate each other about a changed "angle of vision" and yet remain where we are till Doomsday. The time for definite decision and a bold move forward has arrived. The vital question to-day is: Is India fit to be free and to what extent? There can be no shelving of the issue at this juncture. It must be settled one way or the

other. *If* she is not fit to-day, she has got to be made fit for self-government. This, I maintain, is no less a duty and responsibility of the Government than of the people themselves.

TEST OF FITNESS

Is India fit for freedom? We, who are present here to-day, know full well that from the Indian standpoint there can be but one answer. Our critics would probably challenge our conviction. Our only reply to them would be to go forward and put the matter to the proof. After all, what is the test of fitness? If we turn to history, we find that in the past only such people have been declared to have been fit for freedom who fought for it and attained it. We are living in different times. Peace has its victories. We are fighting and can only fight constitutional battles. This peaceful struggle is not and will not be wanting in the quality of vigour and sacrifice, and we are determined to convince the British Empire that we are fit for the place of a partner within the Empire, and nothing less will satisfy India.

MOVEMENT FOR UNITY

But apart from the numerous other considerations that have repeatedly been urged in support of the claims of India to responsible and representative form of Government, the

one that has grown to be of infinitely larger weight and urgency is the living and vigorous spirit of patriotism and national self-consciousness which is chafing under irksome restraints and is seeking wider and legitimate outlets for service and self-expression. The strength and volume of this spirit, this pent-up altruistic feeling and energy of youth, can be easily realised by those who have their finger on the pulse of the country. The most significant and hopeful aspect of this spirit is that it has taken its rise from a new-born movement in the direction of national unity which has brought Hindus and Muslims together involving brotherly service for the common cause. Bombay had the good fortune to see the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League meet for the first time in the same city last December. These simultaneous sessions were brought about with no little labour, anxiety and trouble. I do not wish to go into past controversy, but I venture to say that the session of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay will go down to posterity as peculiarly interesting in its results. The so-called opponents of ours, although for the time being they caused the utmost anxiety and individual risks—which, after all, do not count in a national movement—have, I cannot help saying, rendered the greatest service to our cause. Their unjust attitude served only to stiffen the back of the community. The League rose Phoenix-like, stronger, more

solidified and determined in its ideals and aspirations, with added strength of resolution in carrying out its programme. And to-day your historic city of Lucknow, the centre of Musalman culture and intellect, where three years ago the All-India Muslim League laid down our cherished ideal of self-government under the aegis of the British Crown, is witnessing the simultaneous sessions of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League once more. Indeed, the person who fails to read in the Hindu-Muslim rapprochement within the last few years the first great sign of the birth of united India has little knowledge of the political conditions of a few years ago and has no business to talk of India's future.

IDEALS OF THE LEAGUE

I need hardly say that the Hindu-Muslim question had hitherto lain as a colossal riddle athwart the numerous unifying forces that make for the evolution of a common Indian Nationality. The new temper that we witness to-day is the measure of the change that has happily come over Hindu-Muslim relations. What this change really signifies can only be judged by a reference to the state of things that obtained only a few years ago, when mutual distrust and suspicion were rampant and communal bigots on either side ruled the roost. Everyone of us can easily recall the

frame of Muslim mind and feeling in which the All-India Muslim League was founded at Dacca. To put it frankly, the All-India Muslim League came into existence as an organisation with the main object of safeguarding Muslim interests. Musalmans, as a community, had till then abstained from all manner of political agitation and they were naturally moved by the loud and insistent demand for constitutional and administrative reforms which Hindu politicians were pressing on the Indian Government. They felt—and rightly—the need for organising themselves for political action, lest the impending changes initiated by a liberal Secretary of State should swamp them altogether as a community. This was, perhaps, the only course open to a community proud of the traditions of its past, yet weak in numbers and lacking the strength that organised political activity alone can give. The main principle on which the first All-India Muslim political organisation was based, was the retention of Muslim communal individuality strong and unimpaired in any constitutional readjustment that might be made in India in the course of its political evolution. The creed has grown and broadened with the growth of political life and thought in the community. In its general outlook and ideal as regards the future, the All-India Muslim League stands abreast of the Indian National Congress and is ready to participate in any patriotic efforts for the

advancement of the country as a whole. In fact, this readiness of the educated Muslims, only about a decade after they first entered the field of politics, to work shoulder to shoulder with the other Indian communities for the common good of all is to my mind the strongest proof of the value and need of the separate Muslim political organisation at present. I have been a staunch Congressman throughout my public life and have been no lover of sectarian cries, but it appears to me that the reproach of " separatism " sometimes levelled at Musalmans, is singularly inept and wide of the mark, when I see this great communal organisation rapidly growing into a powerful factor for the birth of United India. A minority must, above everything else, have a complete sense of security before its broader political sense can be evoked for co-operation and united endeavour in the national tasks. To the Musalmans of India that security can only come through adequate and effective safeguards as regards their political existence as a community. Whatever my individual opinion may be, I am here to interpret and express the sense of the overwhelming body of Muslim opinion, of which the All-India Muslim League is the political organ.

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS

It is a matter of infinite gratification to me as well as to all patriotic Musalmans that

the Muslim communal position in this matter has been recognised and met in an ungrudging spirit by the leaders of the great Hindu community. This was so amply demonstrated by the happy and unanimous decision that was arrived at by the Committees of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League that met at Calcutta only last November. Our joint Conferences in Lucknow were marked by honest efforts on either side to find a lasting solution of our differences, and I rejoice to think that a final settlement has at last been reached which sets the seal on Hindu-Muslim co-operation and opens a new era in the history of our country. A few irreconcilable spirits in either camp may still exist here and there, but the atmosphere has on the whole been rid of the menace of sectarian thunder and the prospects of the future are bright with a promise that gladdens the hearts of India's devoted sons. Just as I have no sympathy with a member of my community who even with an assured communal existence would not extend the hand of fellowship to his Hindu brother, so I cannot appreciate the attitude of the Hindu patriot who would insist on his pound of flesh, though, in this struggle, the entire future of the country for the sake of a small gain to one side or the other, may be marred for ever. As an instance, I would like to point out the recent unfortunate controversy that was raised in these provinces over the

passing of the Municipal Act. But, surely, we are not wanting in political wisdom and sagacity. Let us remember, whether Hindus or Musalmans, that New India wants a wholly different type of public worker, of more generous spirit and ampler mould, free from the egoism of sect and the narrowness of bigotry, one who can resist the temptation to crush the weak and yet would not quail before the aggression of the strong, who can rise above the petty preoccupations of the day to the higher plane of devotion and service which alone can give to a people, faith, hope, freedom and power.

SCHEME OF REFORMS

With the satisfactory solution of the most formidable problem that stood in the path of Indian progress towards political co-operation and unity, our constitutional battle may be said to have been half won already. The united Indian demand, based on the actual needs of the country and framed with due regard to time and circumstances, must eventually prove irresistible. It must also be recognised that those responsible for the Government of India have already shown a disposition to treat the existing grievances of the people in a broader spirit of understanding and sympathy. With the restoration of peace the Indian problem will have to be dealt with on bold and generous lines and India will

have to be granted her birth-right as a free, responsible and equal member of the British Empire. How this change is to be effected and what are to be the lines of development and methods of solution, are matters that have been fully occupying the thoughts of Indian publicists for the past two years and authoritative schemes of readjustment have already been formulated and placed before the Government by the nineteen elected representatives of the Imperial Council. You are aware that a Committee of the All-India Muslim League was formed last year and was authorised to draw up a scheme of reform in consultation with the Committee of the Indian National Congress. That scheme is ready and will, at this session, be submitted to you for your consideration and judgment.

A NEW BILL

After you have adopted the scheme of reforms you should see that the Congress and the League take concerted measures to have a Bill drafted by constitutional lawyers as an amending Bill to the Government of India Act which embodies the present constitution of our country. This Bill, when ready, should be adopted by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League and a deputation of leading representative men from both the bodies should be appointed to see that the Bill is introduced in the British

Parliament and adopted. For that purpose we should raise as large a fund as possible to supply the sinews of war until our aim and object are fulfilled.

POSITION OF INDIA IN THE EMPIRE

The first and the foremost question that requires to be put at rest, is that the position of India in the Empire should be defined in the most unequivocal terms. It should be made clear by the Government in an authoritative manner that self-government is not a mere distant goal that may be attained at some future indefinite time, but that self-government for India is the definite aim and object of the Government to be given to the people within a reasonable time. That should be the aim and object of the reconstruction and reformation of the present constitution of the Government of India and immediate steps should be taken after the war to introduce the reforms towards that end in view, both by the Government and the people.

IMPERIAL PARTNERSHIP

Reading the signs of the times, it appears that the claims of the overseas Dominions, such as Canada, Australia and even South Africa, *viz.*, to allow them a voice in the declaration of war and the making

of peace and in Imperial Foreign policy, if they are to bear the responsibilities of the Empire, cannot well be resisted, and it might follow that an Imperial Parliament may be constructed and established, England, Scotland and Ireland having their separate Parliaments for the purpose of managing their internal and domestic affairs, such as the Dominions already have. Sir Joseph Ward, addressing the meeting of the Insurance Institute at Gresham College only last month, said that "in the future reconstruction of the Empire there could not be any interference with local authority and, though an Imperial Parliament was a long way off, they might now work for some effective Imperial Council and that before an organic Parliament was possible, there must be devolution in Britain to pave the way for a federal legislature overseas. The Dominions had no right even to a minority voice as to whether the nation should go to war or what the peace terms should be." He quoted Mr. Asquith's speech at the 1911 Imperial Conference in which the Prime Minister stated that " an Imperial Parliament scheme would impair the authority of the British Parliament." " Since then," Sir Joseph said, " there had been a great evolution of opinion on the subject. Mr. Bonar Law had declared as a result of the war the time was coming when the overseas Dominions would share in the Government of the Empire with Britain. He hoped that before the war

ended some *modus vivendi* would be established." In the political reconstruction, India, the largest part of the Empire, cannot possibly be allowed to continue a dependency, as an adjunct to England, Scotland or Ireland or to be ruled and governed by the Dominions. Hitherto the responsibility, the control and the supervision of India has been vested in Great Britain. The question naturally arises what will be the position of India if an Imperial Parliament with full representation of the Dominions is constituted? Is India to be ruled jointly by England, Scotland, Ireland and the Dominions? Are we to be handed over to this Imperial Parliament and to be thus ruled and to be governed by the Colonies? Are we not to have a status or *locus standi* in this Imperial Parliament? I feel sure that I am expressing the opinion of the entire educated people of this country that India will never allow herself to be relegated to such an intolerable position. Indeed, she does not want a change of masters, nor additional masters. If an Imperial Parliament, such as indicated above, is established, India's right should be recognised and her voice in that Imperial Parliament must be fully and properly secured and represented by her own sons in the Councils of the Empire.

MINIMUM DEMANDS

Next, it is well known that the reforms that are sought by the people of India to be

introduced in the constitutional Government of India, were fully adumbrated recently by the nineteen elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council and I do not wish to repeat them here, as I believe you are all familiar with them already. I was one of the signatories and I would urge upon you to follow them substantially so far as fundamental principles are involved in these proposals. Those demands were formulated by responsible men who own duty to the Government and the people alike as "chosen representatives" not in a spirit of bargaining. Those demands are the minimum in the strictest sense of the word. It is said that these are extravagant demands. It is said it is a big thing. It is said that we are not yet ready for them. It is said that if these reforms are introduced, there will be chaos, and particularly the Anglo-Indian press is not only most unreasonable and disappointing but alarmed. These are mere destructive methods. Similar fears were raised and arguments advanced when the Minto-Morley Reforms were on the legislative anvil. But what is the verdict now, official and non-official, after nearly seven years of actual trial? Need I give the answer? We have not been favoured either by our critics or by the Government as to what is the alternative scheme. We are not taken into the confidence of the secret chambers of the Government where the Government of India, it is said, have been deliberating upon and prepar-

ing a despatch containing their proposals of reform to be submitted to the Secretary of State for India. In England, the representative of the Colonies and the Press and the people and the Ministers are freely discussing the reconstruction of the constitution of the Empire after the war, nay, even before the war is over it is suggested to set up an Imperial Council, whereas in India we are denied the opportunity of knowing even what the Government is contemplating. It will be a great misfortune if any decisions are arrived at with regard to the future of India by the Government and the Secretary of State for India without the proposals being published and placed before the country at large for public criticism and opinion. I must earnestly urge upon the Government that before any final decision is arrived at, the proposed reforms should be published and the people should be given an opportunity to urge their views, and that they should be taken into their confidence. I feel that if the people are bitterly disappointed at this juncture, it will mean the greatest disaster to the future progress of this country.

QUESTION OF THE CALIPHATE

I should be failing in my duty towards my own people and the Government if I did not, at this crisis, make it clear that of the many delicate questions, there is none that requires a closer attention and study than the

question of the Caliphate by the Government and the Ministers of Great Britain. The sentiments and feelings and the religious convictions not only of the Musalmans of India but of the Musalmans of the world are not to be lightly treated. The loyalty of the Musalmans of India to the Government is no small asset. From the very commencement of the great crisis through which the British Empire has been passing, the allegiance of the Musalmans to the Crown and their loyalty to the Government has remained whole-hearted and unshaken. May I, therefore, urge that the Government should have regard for their dearest and most sacred religious feelings and under no circumstances interfere with the question of the future of the Caliphate. It should be left entirely to the Musalmans to acknowledge and accept their own Caliph. I do not desire to dilate on this grave and delicate subject; but much deeper currents underlie this exceptional exhortation of mine, which I have ventured to make both in the interests of the Musalmans and the Government of Great Britain, than it would be expedient at present to discuss on a public platform. But the Musalmans may well claim that their feelings and sentiments relating to their most cherished traditions should receive consideration in the general policy of the Empire, particularly when they coincide with the demands of justice, humanity and international obligations.

HOLY PLACES OF ISLAM

As a spokesman of the Musalmans of India, I must here acknowledge that the noble assurance of the British Government given to them through H. E. Lord Hardinge, the ex-Viceroy of India, as regards the Holy Places of Islam, was received by them not only with the utmost satisfaction but with profound gratitude.

MUSLIM ATTITUDE

I may say a word as to the attitude of the Musalmans of India towards the Government. Our clear duty is to be loyal and respectful, without stooping to a cringing policy. We want no favours, and crave for no partial treatment. That is demoralising to the community and injurious to the State. The Musalmans must learn to have self-respect. What we want is a healthy and fair impetus to be given to our aspirations and ideals as a community and it is the most sacred duty of the Government to respond to that claim. Towards the Hindus our attitude should be of good-will and brotherly feelings. Co-operation in the cause of our Motherland should be our guiding principle. India's real progress can only be achieved by a true understanding and harmonious relations between the two great sister communities. With regard to our own affairs, we can depend upon nobody but ourselves.

We should infuse greater spirit of solidarity into our society. We should remove the root causes and the evil effects of the process of disintegration. We should maintain a sustained loyalty to and co-operation with each other. We should sink personal differences and subordinate personal ambitions to the well-being of the community. We must recognise that no useful purpose is served in petty disputes and in forming party combinations. We should not lose the sympathy of our well-wishers in India and in England by creating a wrong impression that we, as a community, are out only for self-interest and self-gain. We must show by our words and deeds that we sincerely and earnestly desire a healthy national unity. For the rest, the 70 million of Musalmans need not fear.

RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES

A few days ago I came across a paragraph in the "Bombay Chronicle," the well-known daily paper of Bombay, with its Editor Mr. B. G. Horniman, a friend of the Musalmans who has rendered great services to us. It is as follows:

"The following incident, reported by the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* may well be read with profit by those whose perverse imaginations, in spite of proofs to the contrary, always see in the differences of religions in India an

irremovable bar against placing Indians in high offices of trust and responsibility.

"This is how H. H. the Nizam has just disposed of a Hindu-Musalman dispute in his territory. Well, for about a year or so, there sprang a quarrel between the Hindus and the Musalmans of Warrangal about the building of a mosque in a prominent Hindu locality. In spite of many protests from the Hindu population, the other party persisted on constructing one. The Hindus then appealed to His Highness with the result that he was pleased to appoint a committee of enquiry consisting of two Musalmans and one Hindu to report on the matter. The report was in favour of the Hindus and His Highness has been pleased to pass his orders accordingly.

"The action taken by H. H. the Nizam, it need hardly be added, was in accordance with the traditional policy always adopted by the rulers of Hyderabad."

Why can't we, in British India, the Hindus and the Musalmans, try the methods which prove so successful in the territories of H. H. the Nizam, to settle our differences?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion I cannot do better than quote a passage from the recent speech of

the Prime Minister Mr. Lloyd George, every word of which almost literally applies to the conditions in India. Referring to the Irish situation he said, he was convinced now that it was a misunderstanding, partly racial, partly religious. It was to the interest of both to have it removed. But there seemed to have been some evil chance that frustrated every effort made for the achievement of better relations. He had tried once but did not succeed. But the fault was not entirely on one side. He had felt the whole time that we were moving in an atmosphere of nervous suspicions and distrust, pervasive and universal, of everything and everybody. He was drenched with suspicion of Irishmen by Englishmen and of Englishmen by Irishmen and, worse and most fatal of all, by the suspicion of Irishmen by Irishmen. It was a quagmire of distrust which clogged the footsteps of progress. That was the real enemy of Ireland. If that could be slain, he believed, it would accomplish an act of reconciliation that would make Ireland greater and Britain greater and would make the United Kingdom and the Empire greater than they ever were before.

The renaissance of India really lies in our own hands. Let us work and trust in God, so that we may leave a richer heritage to our children than all the gold of the world, *viz.*, Freedom, for which no sacrifice is too great.

APPENDIX IV

LUCKNOW MUSLIM LEAGUE RESOLUTION

The All-India Musilm League, while adopting the scheme of reforms prepared by the Reform Committee of the League and approved by its Council, submits it in conjunction with the Indian National Congress to the Government for its introduction after the war as the first necessary step towards the establishment of complete Self-Government in India.

REFORM SCHEME

I.—Provincial Legislative Councils

1. Provincial Legislative Councils shall consist of four-fifths elected and of one-fifth nominated members.

2. Their strength shall be not less than 125 members in the major provinces, and from 50 to 75 in the minor provinces.

3. The members of Councils should be elected directly by the people on as broad a franchise as possible.

4. Adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election, and the Musalmans should be represented through special electorates on the

Provincial Legislative Councils in the following proportions :—

Punjab—one-half of the elected Indian members.

United Provinces—30 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Bengal—40 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Bihar—25 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Central Provinces—15 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Madras—15 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Bombay—One-third of the elected Indian members.

Provided that no Musalman shall participate in any of the other elections to the Imperial or Provincial Legislative Council, save and except those by electorates representing special interests.

Provided further that no bill, nor any clause thereof, nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question is to be determined by the members of that community in the Legislative Council concerned, shall be proceeded with, if three-fourths of the members of that community in the particular Council, Imperial or Provincial, oppose the bill or any clause thereof or the resolution.

5. The head of the Provincial Government should not be the President of the Legislative Council, but the Council should have the right of electing its President.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions should not be restricted to the member putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. (*a*) Except customs, posts, telegraphs, mint, salt, opium, railways, army and navy, and tributes from Indian States, all other sources of revenue should be Provincial.

(*b*) There should be no divided heads of revenue. The Government of India should be provided with fixed contributions from the Provincial Governments, such fixed contributions being liable to revision when extraordinary and unforeseen contingencies render such revision necessary.

(*c*) The Provincial Council should have full authority to deal with all matters affecting the internal administration of the province including the power to raise loans, to impose and alter taxation, and to vote on the Budget. All items of expenditure, and all proposals concerning ways and means for raising the necessary revenue, should be embodied in Bills and submitted to the Provincial Council for adoption.

(*d*) Resolution on all matters within the purview of the Provincial Government should be allowed for discussion in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself.

(*e*) A resolution passed by the Provincial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-in-Council, provided however, that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

(*f*) A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

8. A special meeting of the Provincial Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

9. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Government should not be required therefor.

10. All Bills passed by Provincial Legislatures shall have to receive the assent of the Governor before they become law, but may be vetoed by the Governor-General.

11. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

II.—Provincial Governments.

1. The head of every Provincial Government shall be a Governor who shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services.

2. There shall be in every Province an Executive Council which, with the Governor, shall constitute the Executive Government of the Province..

3. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Councils.

4. Not less than one-half of the members of the Executive Council shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Council.

5. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

III.—Imperial Legislative Council.

1. The strength of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be 150.

2. Four-fifths of the members shall be elected.

3. The franchise for the Imperial Legislative Council should be widened as far as possible on the lines of the electorates for Musalmans for the Provincial Legislative Councils, and the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Councils should also form an electorate for the return of members to the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. One-third of the Indian elected members should be Musalmans elected by separate Musalman electorates in the several Provinces, in the proportion, as nearly as may be, in which they are represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by separate Musalman electorates.—*Vide* provisos to section I, clause 4.

5. The President of the Council shall be elected by the Council itself.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions shall not be restricted to the member putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. A special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

8. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance

with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Executive Government should not be required therefor.

9. All Bills passed by the Council shall have to receive the assent of the Governor-General before they become law.

10. All financial proposals relating to sources of income and items of expenditure shall be embodied in Bills. Every such Bill and the Budget as a whole shall be submitted for the vote of the Imperial Legislative Council.

11. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

12. The matters mentioned hereinbelow shall be exclusively under the control of the Imperial Legislative Council :—

(*a*) Matters in regard to which uniform legislation for the whole of India is desirable.

(*b*) Provincial legislation in so far as it may affect inter-provincial fiscal relations.

(*c*) Questions affecting purely Imperial Revenue, excepting tributes from Indian States.

(*d*) Questions affecting purely Imperial expenditure, except that no resolution of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Governor-General in Council in respect of military charges for the defence of the country.

(*e*) The right of revising Indian tariffs and custom-duties, of imposing, altering, or removing any tax or cess, modifying the existing system of currency and banking, and granting any aids or bounties to any or all deserving and nascent industries of the country.

(*f*) Resolutions on all matters relating to the administration of the country as a whole.

13. A resolution passed by the Legislative Council should be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-General in Council : provided however that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

14. A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a defi-

nite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

15. When the Crown chooses to exercise its power of veto in regard to a Bill passed by a Provincial Legislative Council or by the Imperial Legislative Council, it should be exercised within twelve months from the date on which it is passed, and the Bill shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the fact of such veto is made known to the Legislative Council concerned.

16. The Imperial Legislative Council shall have no power to interfere with the Government of India's direction of the military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties.

IV.—The Government of India.

1. The Governor-General of India will be the head of the Government of India.

2. He will have an Executive Council, half of whom shall be Indians.

3. The Indian members should be elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor-General.

5. The power of making all appointments in the Imperial Civil Services shall vest in the Government of India, as constituted under this scheme, due regard being paid to existing interests, subject to any laws that may by made by the Imperial Legislative Council.

6. The Government of India shall not ordinarily interfere in the local affairs of a province, and powers not specifically given to a Provincial Government, shall be deemed to be vested in the former. The authority of the Government of India will ordinarily be limited to general supervision and superintendence over the Provincial Governments.

7. In legislative and administrative matters the Government of India, as constituted under this scheme, shall, as far as possible, be independent of the Secretary of State.

8. A system of independent audit of the accounts of the Government of India should be instituted.

V.—The Secretary of State-in-Council.

1. The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.

2. The salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British Estimates.

3. The Secretary of State should, as far as possible, occupy the same position in relation to the Government of India as the Secretary of State for the Colonies does in relation to the Government of the self-governing Dominions.

4. The Secretary of State for India should be assisted by two permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should always be an Indian.

VI.—India and the Empire.

1. In any Council or other body which may be constituted or convened for the settlement or control of Imperial affairs, India shall be adequately represented in like manner with the Dominions and with equal rights.

2. Indians should be placed on a footing of equality in respect of status and rights of citizenship with other subjects of His Majesty the King throughout the Empire.

VII.—Military and other matters.

Commissions in the Army.

1. The military and naval services of His Majesty, both in their commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, should be thrown open to Indians and adequate provision should

be made for their selection, training and instruction in India.

Volunteering.

2. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

Separation of judicial and executive functions.

3. Executive officers in India shall have no judicial powers entrusted to them, and the judiciary in every province shall be placed under the highest Court of that province.

SYED WAZIR HASAN,
Honorary Secretary,
All-India Muslim League.

Lucknow:
1st *January*, 1917.

APPENDIX V

BENGAL PROVINCIAL MUSLIM LEAGUE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I am thankful to you for having honoured me by inviting me to preside over your Provincial Muslim League Conference. I accepted your invitation all the more readily because of the political developments that have taken place during the recent months. You are in the whirlwind of a political storm in Bengal. I have come here to tell you what I think of the situation.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Muslim League has many opponents. We are going through a life and death struggle. We have made it clear over and over again that we are organising our people and have no quarrel with the Hindus or any other community, large or small, in this sub-continent. We have repeatedly declared that the cardinal principle and aim of the Muslim League is to safeguard the political rights and status of the Musalmans of India. We have been on the defensive all along and what have we been wanting? We want to live in this land as free and independent people and not under the *raj* or the government of anyone else. The arrogance, the hatred and the

aggressiveness that is demonstrated by the Hindu leaders that we must live as the minority people, under the domination of the Hindu majority, is patent. It is that policy, that programme, that aggressiveness and that offensive and arrogant attitude against which we are fighting. The Muslims in India are a nation. They will not submit to any position other than that of complete equality with the Hindu community in this country. Now, as I have said, we have our opponents. The British Government are no particular friends of the Musalmans. They have their policy and their programme just as much as the Hindus have theirs and we have ours. In the political world there is neither real justice nor fairplay. Every act and every decision is guided, unfortunately, by self-interest. We cannot look to the British Government or to anyone else for justice and fairplay. We must stand on our own legs and rely on our own strength if we are to achieve anything in this world. We must be prepared to stand alone and make our sacrifices if we are to achieve equality and then alone we shall be able to achieve and establish " Pakistan " in this land.

BENGAL HORIZON

Now let us view the political position of the day. Let us cast our eyes on the horizon of Bengal. Ladies and gentlemen,

this wretched Constitution, to begin with under which your provincial legislatures function to-day is not of our making. The Constitution in itself is a gross injustice to the thirty-five million of Muslims living in this Province. Of course, it will serve no useful purpose if we blame someone or the other. We have to realise and we have to confess that it is our own fault to a considerable extent that the thirty-five million Muslims in one Muslim state, Bengal, had fallen and fallen to such depths that the voice of Muslim Bengal was dead. In these dreadful conditions, to our shame, the present Constitution was enacted almost *ex parte*, if I may be allowed to say, so far as Muslim India was concerned.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Bengal Legislative Assembly consists of 250 members. Of these you have 122 or 123, including the Special Constituencies. These figures will demonstrate to you that from the very word "go" we are a minority. How can this minority possibly run a Government with a workable and practical majority? A Muslim League Ministry cannot be formed that will be stable. For the same reason a Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab or even in Sind cannot be formed. Those who are fond of arithmetical calculations misrepresent

when they say that we in a Muslim majority province cannot form a Muslim League Ministry.

"LAND OF LOTUS"

At the time of the general elections in the year 1936-37, I came to this land of the Lotus. I toured Dacca, Mymensingh, Comilla and other places and discovered that Muslim Bengal was practically dead. I found men who were out to exploit the people to gain their own ends; to exploit the people for the purpose of being returned to the legislatures. This was the condition of Bengal. It was the Muslim League which was admittedly till then an academic body that awakened to the realities of the situation and undertook the duty of organising the Muslims and of contesting the elections. A provincial Parliamentary Board was established and Muslim League candidates were put up for election. Remember, Bengal is a continent in herself. With our young and poor organisation we captured no less than 66 seats in the Assembly and became the largest single party that was returned to the House. The Krishak-Praja Party contested the elections as well. Mr. Fazlul Huq was then the champion of the Prajas. His party won some seats. After the elections he conveniently forgot the Prajas and others and became, by joining the Muslim League, the leader of the largest party in

the Assembly. Not only did he throw over the Prajas and the others but he became a member of the Muslim League and preached the creed of the League all over the province, keeping in his pocket at the same time the small Praja group.

FORMER MINISTRY

Ladies and gentlemen, the Ministry that resigned recently was never a Muslim League Ministry; it was only dominantly a Muslim League Ministry. This dominant Muslim League Ministry was in power when we were faced with a new question. You know when the scheme of the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council came to be considered, it was known as the eighth of August offer. That offer was considered by the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League of which Mr. Fazlul Huq was a member. It was unanimously resolved that it be not accepted and the offer was not accepted. The offer was also considered by the Council of the Muslim League and the decision of the Working Committee was endorsed by it. Mr. Fazlul Huq was also a member of the Council. The Council's decision was further confirmed by the session of the All-India Muslim League. Without reference to the President of the All-India Muslim League, His Excellency the Viceroy decided to expand his Executive Council and to set up the

so-called Indian National Defence Council. It was nothing but the very offer the Muslim League had rejected. In the terms of the offer the Muslim League would have been entitled on the Executive Council whereas the Governor-General selected and nominated two Muslims on his own. This, you will agree, was adding insult to injury. I ask you if it was possible for any self-respecting organisation or for any individual with a shred of self-respect to agree to accept such an offer ? (No, no, from the audience). Mr. Fazlul Huq accepted nomination on the National Defence Council (shame, shame) secretly without reference to the President and without consulting the Working Committee. When the news was published it was found that there were others also who had accepted such appointment but be it said to the honour of the others that both Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan and Sir Mahomad Saadullah bowed to the decision of the Working Committee and resigned from the Defence Council.

MR. HUQ'S PET GAME

The third Muslim League Premier, a Premier that Bengal has produced, I do not know how but it is certainly difficult for any part of the world to produce another like him, wanted time to consider whether he should resign from or remain on the Defence Council. Mr.

Huq has a pet game that we all know so well. We know when he plays it. When in difficulty Mr. Huq always either wants time or falls ill.

The Working Committee did not refuse him time because the Working Committee is a sensible, responsible and considerate body. He was given ten days to come to a decision. He was informed that if he did not resign within that time disciplinary action would be taken against him. He decided, after resorting to many tricks which are public property, to resign from the Defence Council but with what grace? You have all read the contents of the letter that was addressed to the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League on the eighth of September, 1941. He made many vile, undignified, false and unjustified accusations against the President, the Working Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League. Remember, up till then the Council had not even considered the matter of Mr. Fazlul Huq's action. It was naturally impossible for any self-respecting organisation to permit such libellous and scandalous allegations against its President, the Working Committee and the Council. He went on and on and on trying to tax the patience of every respectable Muslim in the country and ultimately, you may say, surrendered to the demand of the League in substance if not in form. He requested us after his reaffirmation

of loyalty and assurance that he meant no insult or reflection on the President or any member to treat the whole incident as closed. The Working Committee in its magnanimity worthy of a great organisation complied with his request and considered the incident as closed. The file had barely been put away when most startling developments took place in Bengal from which it was as patent as daylight that Mr. Fazlul Huq had made exhaustive and elaborate preparations for many months.

THE 'PROGRESSIVES'

He encouraged the formation of a 'progressive' group of a few Muslim members in the Assembly with himself as leader. Remember, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Huq was at that time a member of the Muslim League, President of the Provincial League, leader of the Muslim League group in the Assembly, leader of the Coalition Party, member of the Council of the All-India Muslim League and member of the All-India Working Committee. Further he started a daily newspaper in Bengali named the "Nava Joog" which boldly displayed the following words: "Conducted by Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq." The policy of this daily was to abuse the League and all that it stood for.

On the resignation of the last Ministry he went round collecting signatures. I was told that he collected the signatures of 119 members of the Assembly and petitioned the Governor to commission him to form a Ministry as leader of the Progressive Coalition Party, a party of multifarious and conflicting political and economic interests, a party created overnight to destroy Muslim solidarity and to bring confusion in their ranks. I ask you—I have not given you many details—I ask you for your verdict. Is this not the greatest betrayal of not only the Muslim League but the Muslims of Bengal and of the whole of India? Is this not a case of betrayal and treachery to the Coalition Party of which he was leader for over four and a half years? Yes, it is.

GOVERNOR AND CRISIS

Now let us try and understand the stand taken by His Excellency the Governor in this crisis. Can we believe that the Governor was ignorant of the facts that I have placed before you—that he did not know much more than we did of the actual situation of the time? We have no Intelligence Department but the Governor has. The Governor instead of following the course that has been established by convention in the British Parliament, to call the leader of the largest single party, called a man who had been conspiring even as the head of the Government of Bengal—a man

who was canvassing for support with his hat in hand before being commissioned—an act, to my mind, highly improper and derogatory to the honour and prestige of a person who claims to be a leader—a man who had actually petitioned the Governor to commission him to form a Ministry. The encouragement of such a practice is, I say with emphasis, unknown to any system of Parliamentary Government in the world. Signatures are obtained, most of them at least, for the mere asking. Promises have to be made. Is this not encouraging corrupt practice among your legislators? The Coalition Party having been dissolved, His Excellency should have called the leader of the largest single party which was unquestionably the Muslim League Party. Its leader, Sir Nazimuddin, should have been commissioned first. He ought to have been the first man to tell the Governor whether he could or could not form a Ministry. Sir Nazimuddin is a responsible leader with a clean reputation. He has held responsible positions long before this constitution came into operation. Since the inauguration of the present constitution until the day that the Cabinet resigned, he was in charge of the most important portfolio, namely, Home. As I have said, his record is clean, he is a responsible man and has acquitted himself honourably throughout his career. It was for Sir Nazimuddin to decide whether he would accept the commission to form a Ministry or not. If he

made a mistake and said to His Excellency, "yes, I will" and had he failed to do so or was defeated by a vote of no-confidence, it would have been the funeral of the League and not the funeral of the Governor. The Governor did not give him an opportunity to face a funeral and commissioned, as I have said a few minutes ago, a person holding in his hand an application over the signatures of 119 members obtained, how God alone knows. Even this "mighty" man with his mighty majority could not present His Excellency with a complete list of ministers. The names were given in instalments. Although he had sufficient time he did not face the Legislature with a full list of ministers.

PRESENT MINISTRY

To-day Bengal has nine ministers. Believe me, I shall not be a bit surprised if this 9 is expanded to reach astronomical figures in the course of time as and when it suits Mr. Fazlul Huq and as and when he finds power slipping through his fingers. On my arrival in Calcutta another really ingenious and ridiculous decision of the Ministry was flashed in the press. It was stated that the Government were appointing 13 Whips (interruptions and shouts, 17, 17). The number was 13 when I reached Calcutta, in Serajganj the number has risen to 17 and God alone knows how many more will be

added to this list later ! I put it to the Governor if he can quote any parallel in any legislature in any part of the world where 17 whips are required in a House of 250 ? I ask the Governor if in his own country, in a Parliament of over 600 members, there are 17 whips ?

I do not know how many parliamentary secretaries will be appointed. Let us presume that there will be seventeen parliamentary secretaries ; then the ministers plus the parliamentary secretaries plus the whips and plus a few more jobs here and there will bring the total to about 50 persons who will be kept together by virtue of direct patronage in the legislature. Therefore out of the 119 Mr. Fazlul Huq has almost 50 who will be there with him just for jobs. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the position of the Ministry that is in power to-day in the province of Bengal.

LEAGUE PARTY

Now I come to another important matter because it vitally concerns the Muslims of the province. The Muslim League Party is in the opposition and is, therefore, so long as the Constitution is in operation, entitled to approach the Muslims and to appeal to their electorate against the misdeeds of the Government in power. We are not interfer-

ing with the Hindus at all. We are going to our own people and, surely, are we not entitled to do so? We want to tell the electorate of the treachery of Mr. Fazlul Huq. We want to tell them and prove to them how Mr. Huq is doing incalculable harm to the Muslims of Bengal and to the Muslims of the whole of India. We want to tell them the truth and Mr. Huq hates this. We want to tell them to call upon the representatives they have sent to the Legislature to come to their senses. We want to tell them that these men are causing fatal injury to Muslim interests. Surely we cannot be denied this right. In no country where a constitutional form of government is in operation is this fundamental right denied. Our men are being persecuted and prosecuted. The penal codes of the country are being wrongly utilised. The Defence of India Act, the use of which is permitted only in certain cases and conditions, is being openly abused. I do not know what to say. Is it the Bengal Government or the Bengal misgovernment that is in the saddle? It is the special responsibility of His Excellency the Governor to see that his ministers do not abuse power and the sooner the Governor acts in the matter the better will it be for the peace of the province. As I have said, every effort is being made to prevent us from appealing to the people. Mr. Fazlul Huq realises more than anyone else in the province that almost

99 per cent of the Bengal Muslims are against him and those who have betrayed the Muslim cause. They dare not face openly and frankly and place their case before the people. They want to stop us. We want to tell the truth, they tell the untruth.

They wish to suppress constitutional agitation by abusing the Defence of India Act and other penal laws. Let me say from this platform and I say with full responsibility and without the least hesitation that if His Excellency does not intervene and if this shameful policy is persisted, there will arise in Bengal such a situation that no power, nor even this wretched Government of Bengal, has ever seen. In Bengal will arise a situation for which there is no parallel in her history during the British Raj. We shall not be suppressed, oppressed or tyrannised by this wretched Ministry, a Ministry that does not represent the Musalmans, a Ministry whose Chief Minister and Muslim Ministers do not enjoy Muslim confidence and have completely forfeited it. I also hope that the eyes of the Viceroy will be opened soon to the new situation that has arisen in Bengal.

CALL FOR PROOF

If any party desires to challenge our assertion that we alone represent the Musalmans of Bengal, let us dissolve the Assembly and go to the polls. Let us go to our people and we shall prove that our claim is not exaggerated but is fully justified. I considered it my bounden duty to leave my many commitments and to come to Bengal to appeal to the Musalmans of the Province. To tell them that it is in their hands to put matters right. With unity the Musalmans can achieve everything they desire. To defeat Mr. Huq and his Ministry will be as easy as falling off a log. I was not sure whether Muslim Bengal had grasped and realised the danger of Mr. Huq's move. That is why I came here and I am happy to find that 99 p.c. of the Muslims of Bengal are with the Muslim League and they have understood the game. The Muslims of Calcutta and the Muslims assembled from all over the Province at Serajganj have proved this. I am sure Muslim Bengal will stand firm and united under this great flag of ours and I am sure we shall win.

The Muslim League does not exist for Ministers and Ministries. On the other hand, it is the Ministers and Ministries who can only exist if the Muslim League approves of them. This I want to make

clear. We will not allow anyone to exploit the League for the purpose of becoming a Minister and to utilise the League as the ladder of his personal ambition. I say again, let it be clear here and now and once and for all. Let there be no mistake. We shall not allow men to sneak in and before anyone takes such a step we shall see that he is hurled back.

ALL-INDIA ISSUES

Ladies and gentlemen, I have spoken enough on Bengal for to-day. Let me proceed to other important matters. We have got to consider All-India issues as well and I think I shall be failing in my duty if I do nor express to you my views. So far as the Congress is concerned I find that in their language and in their tone there is less aggressiveness and less arrogance. In the recent speeches of Mr. Rajagopalacharia I find—I shall not express in my own language but I shall quote his own—it is nice of him to pay me a compliment and I thank him for it. " There has been no settlement between the Government and the people and the principal political organisations, over whom such illustrious persons as Mahatma Gandhi and Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah preside. These were not small individuals—one had become as famous as the other and both of them were

tremendously popular in the country. Each had a 'blind following,' let it be so; but it was a true following."

Note the words "true following." Mr. Rajagopalacharia admits that your President has a true following. I am proud of it and I am honoured. He goes on to say:

"Here were, then, two powerful popular organisations of Hindus and Muslims, both at war with the Government and, therefore, with all the operations of the Government. These were facts."

This is the first time that one of the foremost leaders of the Congress has had the courage and frankness to admit that the Congress is a Hindu organisation; and he has uttered the truth. I appeal to Mr. Gandhi to bow before the truth and to declare that the Congress represents the Hindus, and the Muslim League, the Muslims of India. Then and only then there is hope for the two communities to meet on terms of equality and on no other terms can they meet.

PAKISTAN

Now let me proceed to the next point —Pakistan. We have heard many arguments

but what do we find in the latest pronouncement of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru who always thinks in terms of internationalism? What does he say? He does not repeat the wretched arguments that his colleagues and most of the other Hindu leaders have been repeating "ad nauseam." He does not think in terms of India. For him India does not exist. Let me read to you an extract of his speech as reported in the press on the 2nd of this month :

"He wondered how the Muslim League talk of partitioning India and forming a separate Muslim block, when some Islamic countries, which were separate Muslim blocks, had lost their freedom. Those who talked of such partition had closed their eyes and ears to the happenings in the world and had refused to take lessons from the war. He also wondered how a Muslim block in India could stand by itself when in the present-day world big nations could not stand alone."

All that I can say to Mr. Nehru is to let us look after ourselves and to let us see whether we can stand by ourselves. May I know from him how the whole of India can stand alone when in the present-day world big nations have not been able to stand alone?

FUTURE CONSTITUTION

Now I shall deal with the controversy that is still going on with regard to the existing and the future constitution of India. The practical issue of immediate importance which is being emphasised is what is to be done immediately. With regard to this I shall briefly tell you how the matters stand to-day. On the one hand, the British Government are holding fast and tight to the August offer. The declaration of the eighth of August consists of two parts. One part is the declaration of His Majesty's policy with regard to the future constitution of India. The other part is that of the Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council in the interim period by associating the major political parties by getting them to send their representatives to the Executive Council of the Governor-General. Now when it came to a concrete offer, and you know what that offer was, the Congress definitely and clearly declared that they were not prepared to be party to any changes in the Centre or in the Provinces so long as these changes were within the framework of the existing constitution. They rejected the basic principle underlying this proposal of His Majesty's Government.

There are, however, other Hindu organisations, namely, the Hindu Mahasabha, the

Liberal Federation, the Non-Party Conference, now called the Sapru Conference. All these Hindu organisations are one and the same. They masquerade under different names but patrol and reconnoitre on behalf of the Congress.

One brother, the Congress, wants sixteen annas, the other says fifteen annas will do for a start while another says even twelve annas may tempt him and so their game goes on. All have the same objective. If they do not succeed by a frontal attack they bank on success through a backdoor policy under the guise of what they call the setting up of a National Government. They are out to lay as many traps as they can for the destruction of the Pakistan scheme. I declare that they will not succeed. Muslim India is awake and is determined. These Hindu parties are with great zeal encouraging the idea of establishing a National Cabinet, a Cabinet responsible to the Crown. There seems on the face of it very little difference between a Cabinet responsible to the Crown and one responsible to the Legislature. Ladies and gentlemen, this move is a sinister one. In fact, it is the introduction of the thin end of the wedge for how long will the Viceroy be able to overrule the decisions of the majority of his Cabinet supposed to be responsible to the Crown? If he does, then there will arise agitation and the cry that there is oppression

of the majority or high-handedness on the part of the Viceroy will rend the sky. Propaganda will spread like wild-fire that the will of the people—and these people will be the Hindus—is being defied by the autocratic representative of the Crown. The next step will logically be to get the Cabinet responsibility shifted from the Crown to the Legislature, thus securing a definite control over the whole country and thus keeping the Musalmans in a minority position. Who cannot see through this game ? At first glance, it appears to be a harmless and innocent proposition, but in reality it is subtle and all the more treacherous.

So far as the British Government are concerned, up till to-day they stand by the August proposals. Beyond this they will not go. The Congress have rejected these proposals. Our position is that we have accepted them in principle, but when it comes to putting the proposal into practice, they whittle it down to such an extent, that no decent self-respecting organisation can accept it. Our position is, and this we have declared more than once, that we must get a real share not only in the Centre but also in the Provinces.

The Congress to-day unquestionably represents the solid body of Hindu opinion in India and if this body does not accept the basic principle of the August offer, how can

the next step be taken so far as they are concerned? Let them first accept this and prepare the meeting ground and then there will be room and necessity for our sitting together to devise a happy solution. We shall then say what we want and they can say what they want.

In conclusion, I say to the Muslims of Bengal to stand firm, united and consolidated under the banner of the Muslim League. Prepare yourselves Muslims of Bengal and I assure you that victory will be yours. Let us declare that no amount of suppression, oppression, persecution and prosecution will frighten us or will make us deviate from our resolve and our goal. I take this opportunity of giving the authorities and those in power to-day fair warning that if they persist in the prosecution of the policy that they have adopted in the recent months against the Muslim League in Bengal, they will be creating a situation not only in Bengal but also in the rest of India, a situation for which there will be no equal in history. Let them know that we are not merely talking but that we shall resist coercion. I warn them not to force the issue upon us for, if they do, they will rue the day.

APPENDIX VI

BOMBAY RESOLUTION OF LEAGUE

Resolution of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League passed at Bombay in its meeting held in the month of August 1942.

"The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, having given their deep and anxious consideration to the present political development in the country, deplore the decision arrived at by the All-India Congress Committee on August 8, 1942, to launch an "open rebellion" by resorting to mass civil disobedience movement in pursuance of their objective of establishing Congress Hindu domination in India, which has resulted in lawlessness and considerable destruction of life and property.

"It is the considered opinion of the Working Committee that this movement is directed not only to coerce the British Government into handing over power to a Hindu oligarchy and thus disabling themselves from carrying out their moral obligations and pledges given to the Musalmans and other sections of the peoples of India from time to time, but also to force the Musalmans to submit and surrender to the Congress terms and dictation.

"Ever since the beginning of the war and even prior to that the sole objective of the Congress policy has been either to cajole or to coerce the British Government into surrendering power to the Congress—a Hindu body with a microscopic following of other communities—in utter suppression of one hundred million of Musalmans, besides millions of other peoples of this vast sub-continent of India. While claiming the right of self-determination for 'India,' which is a mere Congress euphemism for Hindu majority, it has persistently opposed the right of self-determination for the Muslim nation to decide and determine their own destiny.

"On May 1, 1942, the All-India Congress Committee, by their resolutione, mphatically repudiated the Muslim League demand for the right of self-determination for Muslims and thus closed the door for the settlement of the communal problem, which is a condition precedent to the attainment of the freedom and independence of India. The Congress had also recognised this as an indispensable condition and had there made it a prominent plank in the Congress programme for over twenty years, but by their recent decisions have suddenly thrown it overboard and in its stead substituted the fantastic theory that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem can only follow the withdrawal of British power from India.

"The negotiations of Sir Stafford Cripps with the Congress broke down not on the issue of Independence, but because of the refusal of the British Government to hand over the Muslims and the minorities to the tender mercies of the Congress. Any acquiescence in this on the part of the British would have been strenuously resisted by the ministries, and particularly by the Muslim nation, with memories of tyranny in the Congress-governed Provinces still fresh and vivid in their minds.

"Baulked in their effort to cajole Sir Stafford Cripps to agree to the transfer of power to the Congress caucus, they decided upon a slogan—'Quit India'—accompanied with the threat of mass civil disobedience. This slogan is a mere camouflage, and what is really aimed at is the supreme control of the Government of the country by the Congress.

"The Musalmans are not a whit less insistent on freedom for the country and the achievement of independence of the people of India, which is the creed of the All-India Muslim League. They are, however, firmly convinced that the constituent elements in the life of the country are out for the establishment of Hindu *Raj* and to deal a death blow to the Muslim goal of Pakistan.

"The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League note with dissatisfaction

the attitude and policy of the British Government towards the national aspirations of one hundred million of Muslims of India.

"While the Congress aims at ignoring and suppressing the Muslim demand, the Working Committee regret that the British Government have been unresponsive to the Muslim League's offer of co-operation. The appeasement of the Congress has been the central pivot of the Government policy, with barren and sterile results and has now culminated in the open defiance of law and order.

"Since the commencement of hostilities the Muslim League has been ready and willing, either singly or in co-operation with other parties, to shoulder the responsibility for running the administration and mobilising the resources of the country for the war efforts for the defence of India, if a real share in the power and authority of the Government at the Centre and in the Provinces was conceded within the frame-work of the present Constitution, and in pursuance of this policy, the Muslim League accepted the underlying principles of the August offer of 1940 of the British Government.

"But the Government in implementing the offer, nullified the essential principles of it and so made it impossible for the Muslim League to co-operate with the Government on

honourable terms. In spite of the fact that the British Government had spurned the offer of co-operation of the Muslim League still, under the imminent shadow of the Japanese menace, the Muslim League once again reiterated their offer by their resolution of December 27, 1941 in the following words :

'In view of the fact that the entry of Japan in the war on the side of the Axis Powers has brought the danger much closer to India and has forced into greater prominence the question of the defence of India, the Working Committee consider it necessary to reiterate that the Muslim League from the very beginning has expressed its willingness to share the responsibility of the defence of the country, is evident from the stand taken by the President of the All-India Muslim League as far back as November 1939...The Working Committee once more declare that they are ready and willing as before to shoulder the burden of the defence of the country, singly or in co-operation with other parties on the basis that a real share and responsibility is given in the authority of the Government at the Centre and the Provinces within the framework of the present Constitution, but without prejudice to the major political issues involved in the framing of the future Constitution.'

"But the British Government completely ignored the offer of the Muslim League.

" While the proposals of Sir Stafford Cripps virtually conceded the Congress demands on the right of secession from the British Commonwealth of Nations and forming of a Constituent Assembly with a preponderant Hindu majority for the framing of the post-war constitution, they merely recognised the possibility of establishing Pakistan, supposed to be implicit in the non-accession scheme.

" The Working Committee are definitely of the opinion that if the Muslim masses are to be roused to intensify the war effort with all the sacrifices that are involved in it, it is only possible, provided they are assured that it would lead to the realisation of the inspiring goal of Pakistan. The Muslim League, therefore, calls upon the British Government to come forward without any further delay with an unequivocal declaration guaranteeing to the Musalmans the right of self-determination and to pledge themselves that they would abide by the verdict of the plebiscite of Musalmans and give effect to the Pakistan scheme in consonance with the basic principles laid down by the Lahore resolution of the All-India Muslim League passed in March 1940.

" Having regard to the oft-repeated declaration of the United Nations to secure and guarantee the freedom and independence of the smaller nations of the world the Working

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